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## Abstract

The Ecclesiology of Faber Stapulensis, discernible in his Scripture Commentaries and other related works.

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in the University of Durham,  
by

Sr. M. Cecily Boulding, O.P.

30 September 1982.

Faber Stapulensis, c.1460-1536, a native of Picardy, has been overshadowed by his contemporaries, both as a scripture scholar and a reformer, so that little attention has been paid to the ecclesiology discernible in his scriptural commentaries. His public career commenced with his teaching, editing and printing the corpus of the works of Aristotle in Paris, thus founding a humanist school of philosophy and establishing his reputation as a renaissance man of letters. Personal interest led him to edit various works of mystical theology, and the last thirty years of his life were devoted wholly to the study of scripture. His publications included critical editions of, and commentaries on, the Psalms, Gospels, Pauline and Catholic Epistles, and French translations of the Psalms, the New Testament, and ultimately the entire Bible.

Aware of abuses in the contemporary Church, his humanistic outlook coupled with a genuine piety led him to work for reform of the mechanical and externalistic practice frequently apparent in early sixteenth-century Europe, and in this he was associated with Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet (1472-1534) and the evangelical group of reformers fostered for a time in his diocese of Meaux. Though some of Stapulensis' friends and associates, such as Guillaume Farel, eventually espoused more extreme measures for reform, he himself never seceded from the Church of Rome.

## Abstract

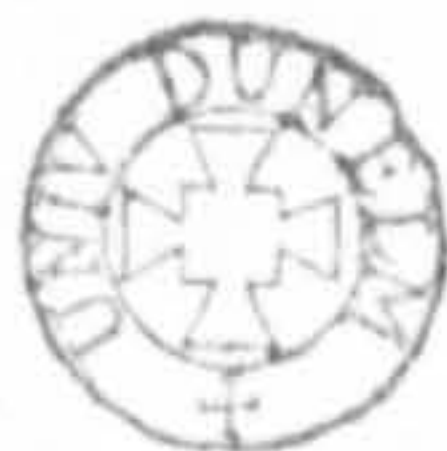
The present thesis, in which an analysis of his scriptural works is preceded by a biographical sketch, seeks to show that it was his ecclesiology which determined his precise position in the Reformation context. Believing the Church to be the mystical body of Christ incarnated in the visible sacramental and ecclesiastical structures, he saw schism as an even greater evil than the most flagrant contemporary abuses.



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IACOBVS FABER *stapulensis.*  
*Barbariem immanem primus, Doctissime FABER,*  
*Propulsas, artes restituisque bonas?*  
*Te primum celebris vidit Iutetia quondam,*  
*Sed tua te pietas expulit inde procul.* *cum priuil.*



Engraving by Hendrick Hondius the Elder, 1599,  
illustrating J.Verheiden,

Praestantium Aliquot Theologorum Qui Romanum  
Antichristum Praecipue Oppugnarunt, Effigies.

(The Hague, 1602)

By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum



## Introduction

Jacobus Faber Stapulensis (Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples) invites consideration because he has received relatively little attention in Reformation studies, being generally overshadowed by figures of seemingly greater stature or more long-lasting importance. It is possible however to present some aspects of his thought, and notably his ecclesiology, in a light which suggests that they have positive significance and that Stapulensis is not to be dismissed simply as an imperceptive, timid or colourless reformer.

When Stapulensis' career has attracted modern scholars it has often been his philosophical works that have been studied, notably in the United States, and his work as a theologian has been noticed mainly in his native France where he is honoured as the first Protestant. Elsewhere he has been largely neglected because his scriptural work is overshadowed by that of Erasmus, and his efforts towards a reform in the Church by those of Luther and Calvin. Roman Catholic scholars have taken little interest in him for the same reasons, with the addition of the fact that some of his works were put on the Index of the Council of Trent, and so he remained suspect even if not formally heretical. On the criterion of visible and lasting achievement it is true that Stapulensis would not seem to have been very effective as a reformer, but it could also be suggested that such judgements result from a quest in his career for the activities characteristic of other sixteenth-century reformers, rather than an objective analysis of what he himself attempted to do.

The first scholar of the modern era to study the work of Stapulensis, Charles Henri Graf, concluded his seminal work, Essai sur la Vie et les Ecrits de Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples, with the question, was Lefèvre a Protestant? and answered this with a definitive "yes". In this view he has been generally followed by other nineteenth and twentieth century scholars who have



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addressed the subject,<sup>(1)</sup> though some have attempted to present a more precise assessment; the elements which distinguished Stapulensis from the Protestant reformers have occasionally been noted, leading to the conclusion that he adopted a middle-of-the-road position which no church embodied,<sup>(2)</sup> or that he lived as a Catholic but thought as a Protestant and lacked any ecclesial sense.<sup>(3)</sup> On the other hand despite his mystical tendencies and his individualism the case has also been made for his orthodox Catholicism.<sup>(4)</sup> In reality the question would seem to be inappropriate. Stapulensis' main lines of thought were formulated before the crisis provoked by Luther; though his life-span covered the first major phase of the Reformation, his approach to the question of Church reform was different from that of the "Protestant" reformers. He may have been stimulated by them at times but he was not greatly influenced by their outlook, deriving his own inspiration from different sources. Literary and humanistic ideals appear to have been the origin of his own reforming programme, and a more apt comparison would be with the career of John Colet, or the basic stance of Thomas More.

During Stapulensis' lifetime the religious situation was not so sharply polarised as it was to become in the later phases of the sixteenth century. In France particularly before the affair of the Placards in 1534, a degree of political and religious equilibrium allowed a genuinely humanist reform movement to get under way without a rigid division into camps of "Catholic" or "Protestant". Stapulensis was able to perpetuate elements in the theology of the Church which became submerged in later Reformation polemics and to synthesise elements which subsequently seemed to be mutually incompatible in the views of many Christian communities. In this way his views serve as a bridge between the mediaeval and the post-Reformation outlook on the Church. His reform programme moreover was not merely a cosmetic elimination of abuses; he did have some important new elements to add to the existing



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concept which would have had the effect of adapting the life of the Church more closely to the situation of Renaissance Europe. It is the argument of the present thesis that Stapulensis had a clear, positive concept of what the Church is, and that this concept was the basis and presupposition which held together the various elements of his reforming work, some of which he incidentally shared with other reformers. It was this same concept which caused him to see schism and secession as worse evils than the flagrant and acknowledged abuses crying out for reform in the Church of his day.

Stapulensis' reform programme included an emphasis on the centrality of faith in the Christian life which would revitalise the appreciation of the sacraments and the exercise of the priestly ministry, a renewed appreciation of the scriptures which should be available to all in the vernacular tongue, and a revived awareness of the dignity of the common priesthood of all the baptised. His irenic attitude led him to believe that such measures would eliminate much that disfigured the Church, and his universalist, all-embracing approach saw no need to depart from the Roman Church which he believed to be fundamentally capable of such a reform and renewal. Many facets of this programme were to be found dispersed among the various post-Reformation Christian churches, but rarely harmonised or synthesised in the way he had envisaged: not until the Second Vatican Council met in 1962 did such a programme begin to make real headway in the Roman Catholic Church. In the twentieth century too, serious ecumenical attempts to reunite the splintered Christian Church have revived awareness of the evil of schism, and led many Christians to realise that such reunion may well depend on a deepened appreciation of the spiritual aspects of the life of the Church that Stapulensis wished to emphasise. It would seem however that any such reunion presupposes the same basis as did Stapulensis' reforming efforts. A

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really agreed view, a genuinely shared concept of what the Church is, is a prerequisite for unity.

The need for reform at the beginning of the sixteenth century was clearly expressed and summed up in the comprehensive memorandum presented to the Fifth Lateran Council in 1513 by Cardinals Guistiniani and Quirini, but effective remedy for the various ills of the Church was partly inhibited by the position and character of the papacy. After 1453 reaction against the Conciliar Movement caused a succession of popes to be mainly concerned with the strengthening and centralisation of papal power, and to spare little serious attention for moral and spiritual reform. The last flicker of Conciliarism occurred during Stapulensis' lifetime, with the meeting of the Conciliabulum of Pisa, and involved some people closely connected with him. The relations of France with the Papacy were governed by the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges; an agreement for the revocation of this was made in 1461, but the French monarchy proved strong enough to continue the bargaining process until the drawing up of the Concordat of Bologna in 1516. Close associates of Stapulensis' were also involved in these negotiations. The "Gallicanism" which resulted from this, leaving a good deal of power over the Church in France in the hands of the king, contributed to the relative freedom with which reformers were able to pursue their activities in France for the first part of the sixteenth century. French politics during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were characterised by a similar centralisation and growth in the power of the crown from the time of the accession of Louis XI in 1461 onwards. Features in this process which were to be significant for Stapulensis' own career were the increasing use made by the King of his Grand Conseil in preference to the meetings of the Estates General, and the development of the role of the Parlement of Paris. The vicissitudes of the Italian wars indulged in by Charles VIII, Louis XII and Francis I were also to have some effect on his fortunes.



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Despite the invention of printing a generation before his birth, the University of Paris in which Stapulensis studied at the end of the fifteenth century was still organised largely on a mediaeval basis which had altered little in the previous three centuries. A humanistic outlook gradually effected some change in the study of philosophy and Stapulensis played a major part in bringing about this development. Change came less easily to the faculty of theology, the Sorbonne, and the struggle between the partisans of scholastic theology and those of renaissance humanism persisted throughout Stapulensis' life, though the latter often enjoyed royal, and sometimes imperial, patronage. Born in Picardy Stapulensis carried the name of his birthplace, Etaples, in common usage to distinguish him from others also called Jacobus Faber or Johannes Faber, two of whom were more or less contemporary with him in Paris. He became a Master of Arts, but did not pursue a formal theological course, and never became a Doctor of Theology. No record of his ordination survives but it is clear that he must have been ordained priest; he showed interest at various times in the monastic life, and lived in a monastery for a considerable part of his life without ever becoming a monk. He produced a remarkable volume of work during a fairly long life, which included eighteen major philosophical publications, twenty assorted works on theology and spirituality, and sixteen scriptural works. By the end of his life he enjoyed an international reputation in the "Republic of Letters".

The particular aspect of his career which is of interest in the present thesis is his gradual conversion from the life of a humanist scholar and teacher to that of a pastoral reformer whose studies became confined to the scriptures. Several years spent in translating, editing and teaching the works of Aristotle gave him a general culture and an interest in ancient languages, though his actual competence in this field was probably



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limited. Travel in various parts of France, Germany and Italy widened his horizons and stimulated his thirst for collecting books, and though European politics in general had little interest for him, his works do betray an awareness of the contemporary threat posed by the Turkish invasion in the Balkans. During the earlier part of his teaching career he drew up an ideal programme of study which attempted to combine still useful elements of the mediaeval curriculum with more modern contributions from classical philosophy and scriptural studies. At a later date he attempted to formulate a humanistic hermeneutic for the exegesis of scripture, and a series of criteria according to which controverted theological topics should be examined. He seems to have been a dedicated and gifted teacher, able to make his students keenly interested in studies which they enjoyed, and to retain their affection and respect for years afterwards. Clearly he saw the printing press as an invaluable aid in the work of teaching, and much of his success depended on his publication of useful editions of standard texts.

Though Stapulensis was genuinely shocked by the abuses current in the Church, of which he must have become more and more aware as his experience widened, his tendency towards a more spiritual way of life, leading him to exchange the role of university lecturer for that of a diocesan official and pastoral reformer, seems to have been innate in his own personality. An interest in spiritual and mystical writings had been apparent long before he finally left the university of Paris, and the outlook and attitude exhibited in his later publications and activities as a reformer remain entirely consistent with his earlier characteristics. He continued to see the printing press as an essential instrument in his work, and shared the early renaissance view that the publication of books was a quasi-religious vocation. The development that was apparent in his own life is closely parallel to his ideal for reform in the Church; it would seem that as time went on he became



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more interested the things of the spirit, and rather less concerned with mundane or external realities. So too, he would have liked to see Church reform take the way of a deepened spiritual awareness with less concentration on externals. However his own early career meant that such a tendency would not, in his case, find fulfilment in total withdrawal into a monastic or eremitical life. Publication and dissemination of religious texts, and more specifically the texts of scripture, so that others also could find a stimulus to increasingly spiritual devotion, remained a compelling "vocation" which he could not abandon, even when his efforts were obstructed by the Sorbonne or the activities of the Parlement of Paris.

It is the contention of this thesis that it was Stapulensis' "mystical" tendency and his increasingly spiritual outlook that prevented him from ever becoming a "Protestant" reformer. In a general way it could be said that the Protestant remedy for abuse and corruption in the Church was to discard, or at least devalue, the role of structures, external forms and ceremonies, and to encourage a concept of the Church which saw it as essentially, even exclusively, a spiritual, invisible reality in which material elements had a very secondary and accidental role. It would seem that Stapulensis was able to transcend rather than reject those external elements so liable to misuse or corruption without denying their essential function in the Church of Christ. This transcendence brought about a shift of emphasis in his concept of the Church without involving any substantial change in belief or doctrine, and his positive, non-polemical attitude illustrated the irenicism which was still current among many reformers until the Council of Trent established the barriers between the various camps of Christians. The change of emphasis discernible in his work offered a superficial similarity to the work of other reformers, in that it involved a more central position for personal faith, constant repetition of the truth that man's salvation



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is entirely dependent on God's mercy, and strong encouragement to frequent reading of scripture in the vernacular, with correspondingly less attention being given to the sacramental practice traditional in mediaeval Europe and to the teaching authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Stapulensis however saw no inconsistency between his earlier and later emphases, but rather considered his final stance, aptly illustrated and summed up by his translation of the whole Bible into French in 1530, as the logical and true fulfilment of his vocation faithfully pursued throughout his life.

The immediate source of Stapulensis' ecclesiology is to be found in the work of Nicolas of Cusa, De Docta Ignorantia, book III chapter XII, De Ecclesia; the notion there briefly expressed can be traced in an expanded and adapted form throughout all Stapulensis' scriptural works where any allusion to the Church is found. Cusa asserts that all those joined to Christ by faith and charity in this world, or by the vision and fruition of him in the next, subsist only in virtue of that union with Christ. Retaining their individual personalities and consequently their graduated states and degrees, they are nevertheless joined to him in a union so close that no more intimate union is possible. Cusa goes on to state that this union is the Church, or congregation of many in one, just as many members make up one body where each has his own place and one is not another, yet all are one body. In accord with his own, somewhat complex, philosophy Cusa develops this theme to show that this union among members of the body is mediated precisely by that which arises from it, the body to which all members are united; consequently no one can have life or subsistence without the body, and all the members are only made one body by means of the body. When we are released from this Church militant we can only rise again in Christ, that is, in the corresponding relation-



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ship with him which we enjoyed here on earth; there is only one Church triumphant where again each member will keep his place in his own order. The reality of our flesh is not in itself but in the flesh of Christ, as is also the case with our body and the body of Christ, our spirit and the Spirit of Christ. As there is only one and the same humanity of Christ in all men, so one only Christ arises out of all men. Thus the man who in this life receives a share in that united body which gives rise to this one Christ, receives Christ himself. Though he is made merely the least of its members, he is made Christ.

Cusa carefully safeguards the persistence of individual identity both here and hereafter, and emphasises that all the efforts of the Christian to establish or deepen this relationship with Christ are useless on their own and succeed only in virtue of the grace of God. We should nevertheless strive for the fulfilment of our potential (which Cusa has expressed in some detail in terms of progress in faith and charity) in order that "on the day of resurrection we may be found noble and integral members of Christ". For Cusa it is the natural aptitude of the intellect to receive life into itself and to be changed into that life; its natural object is incorruptible truth which it grasps in quiet and peace eternally in Jesus Christ - and this is the Church triumphant.

The hypostatic union of the human and divine natures in Jesus Christ is an essential element in Cusa's concept of the Church. In Christ the human nature subsists in the divine; all rational creatures united to Christ even in this life by faith and charity, and subsisting only in the reality of the body into which they are drawn by the Spirit, therefore become Christ in Christ Jesus. As Christ is truly God, so all these rational creatures (angels and men) through him become God in God, though they retain their own personal being. In a similar way God, while remaining absolute in



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himself, is Jesus in Jesus Christ, and so through him, is all (things) in all (men). The Church is said to be the universitas plurium, the universal gathering of many, without confusion of nature or status; so the more she is one, the more she is church, and the Church triumphant is most truly church for she is most completely one. What this oneness is can be glimpsed by considering the most absolute unity of divinity, the union of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ, and the oneness of the Church triumphant in the union of all the blessed with the divinity of Jesus. From that highest unity, the union of the two natures in Christ, arises the unity which makes the Church what she is. The unity of the Church is more than merely ecclesiastical unity; it coincides with the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ, which in turn coincides with the absolute unity which is God. This unity is the suppositum of the Church, so that even though she does not always appear to be one, the apparent diversity of her life is nevertheless resolved through Jesus into that divine union from which she also had her beginning. Ecclesiastical unity coincides with the hypostatic union because it is the Spirit of Jesus, who is the Holy Spirit, which is the bond uniting all the members of the Church triumphant; as St. John says: Thou in me and I in them, that they may be perfectly one.

It seems clear that this chapter of Cusa's work had a far-reaching influence on Stapulensis, but it might well be asked whether any sources can be traced for Cusa's own ideas. The earliest explicit treatise on the nature of the Church would seem to be that of James of Viterbo, De Regimine Christiano, in 1302, and this was followed during the later middle ages, and especially during the Conciliar period, by works on the subject from such writers as Pierre D'Ailly, and John of Turrecremata, but these writers were more concerned with the external sociological nature of the Church, with its structured hierarchy and the powers to be exercised by its ministers. Cusa's approach has nothing in common with theirs, and it would seem that



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the hint he gives at the beginning of the chapter considered above points to his main source. His opening phrase is "that faith is found in unequal degrees in different men". This is almost a quotation from the Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas, Prima Secundae, Q<sup>ue</sup>stio 12, article 4, where the question is "Whether grace can be greater in degree in one man and less in another". Aquinas' concern is the same as Cusa's, how the unity of the Church can be reconciled with variations in status, office, function and degrees of grace and charity.

Aquinas did not write a single treatise explicitly on the subject of the Church, but it has been convincingly demonstrated by Y.M.J. Congar (The Thomist, April 1939) that a clear and well-developed concept of the Church seen as the mystical body of Christ, incarnated in the visible hierarchical and sociological structures which existed in the Christendom of his day, underlay a great deal of his theology of salvation. With appropriate distinctions the same would be true of other great scholastic theologians such as St. Albert the Great, St. Bonaventure or the Englishman Alexander of Hales, and it seems likely that Stapulensis does stand, indirectly, in the scholastic tradition.

In comment on the Symbolum Fidei, the Apostles' Creed, Aquinas said "As in man there is one soul and one body yet a diversity of members, so the Catholic Church is one body and has different members. The soul which quickens this body is the Holy Spirit.... He who says Church says Congregation, and he who says Holy Church says Congregation of the Faithful, and he who says Christian man says member of that Church". For him Christians live by the life of God and yet are able to remain individual personalities; the unity which grafts men into God is patterned on the triune oneness of the Absolute. Aquinas sees the substance of the Church as the new life which men receive by the virtues of faith, hope and charity, a life which is tending



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constantly towards God and has God for its end; indeed the Secunda Pars of the Summa Theologiae is wholly concerned with the economy of this return of rational creatures to God, and for Aquinas this is the Church. This return can only be accomplished in Christ, "who, as man, is our way of tending to God". It can even be said that a kind of Platonism is apparent in Aquinas' thought, since he presents Christ as the head of the Church, the head of the new humanity, who contains in himself the fulness of all the effects of grace which are to be spread abroad in the Church. The theological and moral life of men, the new life in the Church which carries them towards God, is the life of Christ in them. The goal of man is thus to realise perfectly in actuality the image and likeness of God in which he has been made, and for Aquinas the degrees of realisation of this image are the degrees of incorporation into Christ.

Further Aquinas seems to see the visible, institutional Church as the mode of being of the mystical body and the new life in Christ, and as the sacrament, or instrument of its realisation. Thus actual, physical membership of the Church is necessary for salvation, as becomes clear when he deals with the question of schism; it is the intention of the schismatic to separate himself from the unity established by charity, which not only unites one person with another, but the whole Church in a unity of spirit. The unity of the Church is a communion of the members among themselves, and also an ordering of all members to one head, Christ, in whose place the Sovereign Pontiff acts in the Church. Men are joined to this Church by means of faith and the sacraments of faith, which are thus the means which actually construct the Church. What is somewhat obscure in Cusa's philosophical context was much clearer in the writings of Aquinas, and though Stapulensis never quoted Aquinas in his own scriptural writings, he seems to have owed him a considerable debt.



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The present thesis is concerned only with the ecclesiology of Stapulensis, and will make no attempt to examine, or evaluate, other themes in his theological thought except in so far as they touch on the question of ecclesiology. The controversies of the sixteenth century were not, in general, concerned with Trinitarian or Christological doctrines on which the principal reformers remained in agreement, and it seems possible to assert that the real Reformation divide comes precisely in the area of ecclesiology. Different concepts of the nature and function of the Church are the matrix from which spring the other chief topics of controversy, the nature and role of faith, of salvation, of sacramental practice and of authority. Detailed study of other topics in Stapulensis' work should therefore follow an examination of his ecclesiology, and be conducted in the light of it.

Consideration is here limited to Stapulensis' scriptural writings because they form the most coherent collection of material of a theological nature among his publications; his other spiritual or theological works are of a more "occasional" nature. The scriptural corpus also represents the most obviously mature phase of his own spiritual progress, and in so far as it was his vocation to be a reformer in the Church, it is among his scriptural works that one would expect to find the fullest exposition of his programme for reform. It should be remembered however that he himself did not claim to portray a systematic or detailed ecclesiology, or an ordered and definitive plan of reform. Such systematic treatment as can be found in the present thesis has been superimposed on his own work for the sake of clarity. An attempt has been made to discover what he saw as the essential characteristics of the Church, how he believed men are integrated into that Church, and what he understood by the salvation they attain therein. Further, an



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attempt has been made to outline what reform measures he envisaged and to examine whether these produce any essential alteration in the ecclesiology already discerned.

No attempt is made here to consider the work of others who were associated with Stapulensis. He seems to have been the centre of a circle of scholars and would-be reformers for most of his career, and many of these people clearly had some degree of influence on his development. Various scholars lent him books, collected manuscripts for him, and in different ways encouraged him to read widely even when the literature concerned was proscribed by some authority. Friends and patrons helped him to travel, and to make acquaintances in exalted circles. Admiring pupils gathered round him and stayed with him to cooperate in his work of editing and publishing texts. Devout Christians, both clerical and lay, such as Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet and the princess Marguerite of Angoulême, sought his spiritual advice and counsel, and enabled him to exercise considerable influence on the religious lives of others. Attempts to assess the influence of all these people would be futile, but there are other reasons for isolating Stapulensis as the subject of study. From the first point at which he comes clearly into view, he appears as the leader of the circle, even though he would obviously still be subject to influence from his associates. There are also occasional hints of his positively resisting influence and persuasion, and trying to alter the stance or views of his friends and pupils. It might also be claimed that he was the only member of his immediate circle who remained entirely consistent in the development of his views. He neither espoused radical extremes of thought or action, nor adopted a more cautious or restricted viewpoint than he had previously held, when opposition or danger threatened. Such a character, who

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sought and achieved something of a via media, is never likely to arouse dramatic or widespread attention, but it can be shown that his life and thought are not without interest. Since no major work on him exists in English, it seems useful to preface a consideration of his ecclesiology with a biographical sketch.

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- (2) Henry Heller, Marguerite of Navarre and the Reformers of Meaux. Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, XXXIII 1971, pp.271-310.
- (3) Guy Bédouelle, Lefèvre d'Etaples et l'Intelligence des Ecritures, Geneva, 1976.
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## Chapter I

### Events in the Life of Jacobus Faber Stapulensis.

Jacobus Faber Stapulensis was born at Etaples, south of Boulogne sometime between 1450 and 1460. He became a Master of Arts in Paris before 1486 and was probably ordained priest at the same time, when he began his teaching career in the Faculty of Arts at the Collège de Cardinal Lemoine. He continued to lecture in philosophy until 1508, and never proceeded to a doctorate.<sup>(1)</sup> In 1508 he retired from active teaching and went to reside at the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, where he remained until 1518. Shortly after that he followed his friend and patron Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet to the latter's diocese of Meaux, and spent the next seven years there. In 1525 he was forced to flee to Strasbourg, and when he returned in 1526 it was to the royal court at Blois. In 1530 he moved to the court of Marguerite of Angoulême at Nérac where he died in 1536 or 1537.<sup>(2)</sup> Significant phases of his career can thus be associated with three places, Paris, St. Germain-des-Prés and Meaux.

Stapulensis' career as a writer and publisher covered the whole of his active life, and his literary ventures originated from his immediate concern as a teacher of philosophy in Paris. His first work, compiled in 1490, was An Introduction to Aristotle's Metaphysics, circulated privately for the use of his students; not until 1494 was it published in his edition of Paraphrases in Octo Aristotelis Physicos Libros.<sup>(3)</sup> His first published work was the 1492 edition of this same text, and philosophical works were his primary concern until 1497, when texts on other subjects began to attract his interest. The last philosophical work that he himself composed was the In Politica Aristotelis Introductio of 1508.<sup>(4)</sup> It was thus as a philosopher and humanist textual critic that Stapulensis originally made his name.<sup>(5)</sup> During the twenty years of his teaching career in Paris he translated, edited and printed virtually the entire Aristotelian corpus, thus



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making it easily available and assimilable for the benefit of his students.<sup>(6)</sup> His aim was to rescue and restore the works of Aristotle from such deformation as they had suffered in the era of scholasticism<sup>(7)</sup>; Thomas More described him as: "... the true restorer of true dialectic, and of true philosophy, chiefly Aristotelian philosophy...".<sup>(8)</sup> The method of introduction and commentary which he developed at this time, and which remained the basis of such work throughout his life, will be discussed in the next chapter. At this period however, his interests were not exclusively confined to Aristotle; he understood philosophy in a broad sense which included the study of mathematics, music, geography and astrology.<sup>(9)</sup> He even wrote a text on the subject of magic, De Magia Naturali, in 1492, concerned largely with astrology and the casting of horoscopes. It was however never published, and he was later to say that magic was "the first name of impieties "<sup>(10)</sup>. He had more hard words for it in some of his later commentaries.<sup>(11)</sup>

Humanistic interests seem to have been the motive for his first recorded trip outside France, for in 1491-2 he visited Venice, Florence and Rome, partly to observe at close quarters the school of Hermolao Barbaro.<sup>(12)</sup> He met and conceived a lasting admiration for Pico della Mirandola, who lent him Bessarion's translation of Aristotle's Metaphysics. Not all aspects of the Italian renaissance pleased him however; although he said that he "regarded Marsilio Ficino as a father",<sup>(13)</sup> he seems to have been somewhat repelled by the moral indifference apparently encouraged by the neoplatonist trend of some poets and philosophers, and he condemned the study of pagan poetry.<sup>(14)</sup> In 1500 he made the Holy Year pilgrimage to Rome, and profited by the opportunity to discuss cosmography with Jacob ben Emmanuel the Jewish physician of the Borgia pope Alexander VI.<sup>(15)</sup> By 1506 he had been introduced into the court circle at Bourges, and again visited Rome in 1507 in the train of King Louis XII. On this occasion some of his other interests came to the fore, for he was occupied in collecting the works of Nicolas of Cusa.<sup>(16)</sup>



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An autobiographical reflection in 1505 suggests that about 1491 Stapulensis may have entertained the idea of entering a monastery.<sup>(17)</sup> Since he was dissuaded from this purpose it is impossible to tell how serious was his intent, but the idea may have had some connection with a growing interest in mystical spirituality which was to become prominent in his work of editing and publishing texts. Not long after the trip to Rome he left the schools of Paris and settled at the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés in 1508. In 1505, as part of the reform movement supported by Georges d'Amboise, Cardinal Guillaume Briçonnet had been induced to transfer the abbey to his son Guillaume, and the new abbot, a friend and former pupil of Stapulensis, invited the latter to become his librarian there.<sup>(18)</sup> This change in Stapulensis' life was accompanied by another: in the same year his last original work in the field of philosophy, his Introduction to an edition of Aristotle's Politics, was composed, presumably at St. Germain-des-Prés. After this his original studies were devoted to what may be comprehensively called "theological" subjects, though he did re-edit philosophical texts for printing for another eight years.<sup>(19)</sup>

Stapulensis' interest was now devoted to a range of theological topics which may be more specifically classified as doctrinal, spiritual and mystical, and scriptural. His interest in this area was not entirely new, for he had already produced translations or editions of half a dozen works concerned with mysticism, and one straightforward doctrinal work by 1507,<sup>(20)</sup> but after 1508 such works were to be his primary output. He developed his own characteristic approach to the spiritual life which owed a good deal to his veneration for the mystical works of the pseudo-Dionisius, an approach which will be more fully analysed in the next chapter.<sup>(21)</sup> It is in the context of this concern with mystical works and the cultivation of the spiritual life that his first two scriptural works, the Quincuplex Psalterium of 1509 and his edition of the Epistolae Pauli



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of 1512 should be considered; just how his study of scripture evolved from his spiritual studies will be further analysed in the next chapter. The unifying factor in his work at this time seems to have been a form of spiritual renewal, a desire for a revitalised and more intense spiritual life both for himself and for others, which may have been part of the reason for his move to St. Germain-des-Prés in the first place.<sup>(22)</sup> It is in this sense that he first appears as a reformer; in 1507 his concern for the renewal of theology had been manifested by his decision to translate for himself a basic patristic text, the Theologia of St. John Damascene, rather than to continue to rely on Lombard's Book of the Sentences which was still in standard use in the schools.<sup>(23)</sup> His interest in defending the truth of Christianity was illustrated by his publication in 1509 of the Confutatio Alcorani of Ricoldo da Monte Croce,<sup>(24)</sup> and his Quincuplex Psalterium in the same year was partly prompted by a desire that monks should get more profit from their recitation of the Divine Office. His interest in individual personal prayer would also seem to be demonstrated by the various mystical works edited between 1494 and 1512, of which the most influential in his own life were those of the pseudo-Dionisius.<sup>(25)</sup> This first phase of his renewal or reform movement was in a sense summed up or focussed in the journey he made through the Rhineland in 1510, when he passed through Aix, Strasbourg and Cologne, visiting various houses of the Brethren of the Common Life, and returning through Rupertsberg, Bingen, Mainz and the Moselle Valley.<sup>(26)</sup> It was on this journey that he collected the De Officio Missae which he published in 1510, presumably with the aim of stimulating an improved standard of liturgical celebration,<sup>(27)</sup> and the various works he published in 1513 in the volume Liber Trium Virorum, which included visionary material concerned with the mystical life, treatises containing outspoken criticism of the Church, and at least one sub-apostolic text.<sup>(28)</sup> A remark made to his pupil, Guillaume Farel: "My son, God will renew the world, and you will see it happen", may belong to the year 1512.<sup>(29)</sup>



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This development of an interest in religious reform coincided with the contemporary current of affairs in France in so far as a reforming movement of sorts had been afoot since 1470.<sup>(30)</sup> It was apparent in the holding of various synods and councils in the period 1470-1512, in a revival of studies and in the development of humanistic scholarship in Paris especially, and in the reform of religious orders or particular monasteries and convents. The first of these areas of reform involved a good deal of entanglement with "Gallican" politics, of argument over the renewal, or the abolition, of the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, and culminated in the French-patronised conciliabulum, or renegade council, of Pisa in 1512.<sup>(31)</sup> These events may have had some bearing on Stapulensis' own life although he was not directly involved. Cardinal Briçonnet, father of his friend and patron at St. Germain-des-Prés, was one of the prime movers in the convocation of a council to open at Pisa on 1 September 1511, under the terms of the decree Frequens of the Council of Constance, to deal with reform in the church. Pope Julius II countered this with the convocation of the Fifth Lateran Council for 19 April 1512, and all participants in the Pisa conciliabulum were declared heretical and deprived of their dignities on 13 February 1512. A "rump" held out for nearly two years, declaring the pope contumacious and suspending him from his spiritual and temporal powers.<sup>(32)</sup> This activity had the support and backing of the French crown, and in general of the Parlement, and it was not therefore surprising that the younger Briçonnet, still at this time something of a court prelate, was a participant in some of the Pisa sessions.<sup>(33)</sup> Some people evidently expected Stapulensis to follow his example, but he remained in Paris and apparently took no part in the affair.<sup>(34)</sup> Denis Briçonnet, another son of the Cardinal, attended the eighth and ninth sessions of the Fifth Lateran Council in December 1513 and May 1514, and presented his own and his father's submission to Pope Leo X; both Briçonnets were duly restored to their



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dignities on 17 April 1514.<sup>(35)</sup> Shortly after this Stapulensis accompanied Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet to the deathbed of his father in the city of Narbonne, where the Cardinal died on 14 December 1514.<sup>(36)</sup> Maybe it was such a view from the sidelines of this aspect of church reform that prompted Stapulensis to seek other means of reforming religious life in his day.<sup>(37)</sup> His works take very little notice of the, somewhat abortive, Fifth Lateran Council,<sup>(38)</sup> and also exhibit remarkably little interest in the contemporary papacy.<sup>(39)</sup>

A different area of contemporary reform was to have much more influence on his life. After the Synod of Sens in 1485 reform of a number of religious houses did get under way, especially among the Benedictines and the Brethren of the Common Life. It was part of the reforming movement among the Cluniac monks that had actually brought Guillaume Briçonnet to St. Germain-des-Prés in 1505.<sup>(40)</sup> In 1515 the abbey was officially joined to the Cluny Congregation which subjected it to the reformed statutes of the abbey of Chézal-Benoist and to regular visitation, though its particular rights and status were protected by papal bull.<sup>(41)</sup> Reform here under Briçonnet's patronage evidently created around Stapulensis an atmosphere congenial to him, and conducive to the sort of work with which he was now concerned; it seems that when some of the monks, disgruntled at the changes, moved elsewhere, others among Stapulensis' friends and pupils were able to move into the vacated accommodation.<sup>(42)</sup> Editing and publishing remained his main work at this time; his edition of Damascene was reprinted in 1512/3, and the Quincuplex Psalterium in 1513 and 1515. The period 1512-16 produced further significant editions of mystical works chief among which was that of the works of Nicolas of Cusa in 1514.<sup>(43)</sup>

It was this third area, the revival of studies with a humanist outlook that was ultimately to set the tone of Stapulensis' own reforming work, and also the one which was to lead him into most trouble. The syllabus of studies in the University of Paris had not changed a



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great deal since the high Middle Ages, and the faculty of theology in particular was still organised on a mediaeval basis.<sup>(44)</sup> Bachelors gave biblical lectures using the Glossa Ordinaria, some of the patristic commentaries and other mediaeval glosses, while the Masters in Theology still commented on the Book of the Sentences. A reform commission of 1452 had demanded that students of philosophy should make a deeper study of metaphysics but Paris philosophical studies had been of a largely Nominalist persuasion since 1350, and it was probably such a Nominalist school that Stapulensis first experienced in 1473, and which made him disillusioned with degenerate scholasticism.<sup>(45)</sup> He was one of the leading lights in establishing a school of ancient philosophy after 1486, and though he was at first attracted by Platonism, from 1490 onwards he devoted his energies to teaching Aristotle, and to producing respectable texts of his works furnished with apparatus for the benefit of his students.<sup>(46)</sup> This development did not go entirely unopposed, and from Stapulensis' point of view its most significant opponent was Noel Beda who became principal of the Collège de Montaigu in 1504.<sup>(47)</sup> In 1508 he enacted statutes which seriously inhibited humanist studies there, and he was to be Stapulensis' bitter critic and accuser in later years.<sup>(48)</sup> Stapulensis' critical work on original texts was to involve him in three celebrated disputes in the second decade of the sixteenth century: in one he supported the cause of Reuchlin and so earned the enmity of Beda and the Sorbonne, in a second he crossed swords with Erasmus, and in a third his own original work was the cause of controversy.

In 1496 Reuchlin published a work, the De Verbo Mirifico, which made available to the Christian reader the elements of the Jewish Kabbalah.<sup>(49)</sup> Stapulensis had read this with interest sometime before 1509 for he quoted from it in his Quincuplex Psalterium.<sup>(50)</sup> In 1506 Reuchlin published his Rudimenta Lingua Hebraica, to which it seems Stapulensis owed his own modest knowledge



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of Hebrew, and sometime before 1513 Reuchlin sent Stapulensis manuscripts of the works of Nicolas of Cusa with which he was extremely pleased.<sup>(51)</sup> Not suprisingly therefore, when Reuchlin's orthodoxy was attacked by the Dominicans in Cologne after his response to the convert Jew Pfferkorn, he sought Stapulensis' support, sending him his Apologia in August 1513 and asking him to study the text and guarantee his orthodoxy.<sup>(52)</sup> Though an inquisitorial process in Mainz condemned Reuchlin the sentence was suspended by two archbishops and ultimately reversed by a papal delegate.<sup>(53)</sup> Since the Dominicans in Cologne still pressed their case various universities took sides in what became a dispute between "humanists" and "scholastics". Requested to judge extracts from Reuchlin's works the University of Paris appointed a commission in April 1514 which included representatives of both camps, but, after forty-seven sessions, on 2 August 1514 this commission upheld the condemnation of Reuchlin's Augenspiegel which had been solemnly pronounced by the theology faculty of Cologne six months earlier on 10 February 1514.<sup>(54)</sup> On 31 August 1514 Stapulensis wrote to Reuchlin encouraging him to appeal to the pope against this judgement, since it was not, he pointed out, a juridical but only an academic one; he should do this not for his own sake alone but for that of all humanist scholars.<sup>(55)</sup> Stapulensis' support however did Reuchlin little good and turned the unwelcome attention of heresy-hunting members of the Sorbonne towards himself. By December 1514 criticism of his attempt to correct the Vulgate and of his denial of St. Jerome's authorship was being voiced by the Doctors of Louvain and by some Roman theologians.<sup>(56)</sup> However, powerful support for Reuchlin and for the "fabrists" was still available in France from, among others, Guillaume Petit and Guillaume Briçonnet.<sup>(57)</sup> Though it seems that Stapulensis did not bother to defend himself before leaving Paris to attend the deathbed of Cardinal Briçonnet in December 1514, others such as Josse Clichtove sprang to his defence.<sup>(58)</sup> With the death on 31 December of King Louis XII and the accession of Francis I a more favourable climate for the humanists came to



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prevail in France, and in May 1515 the supporters of Reuchlin drew up a defence which cited Stapulensis' Pauline Commentary.<sup>(59)</sup> The Sorbonne, loath to give up the cause entirely, sought the King's permission to interview Stapulensis informally about Reuchlin's Apologia, and to solicit proceedings in Rome to uphold their judgement, but it seems that at the time these moves came to nothing.<sup>(60)</sup> Pope Leo X did appoint a commission to re-examine the sentence on Reuchlin in response to the demands of the Dominicans in Cologne, but the process dragged on slowly and was indefinitely adjourned by the Pope on 20 July 1516.<sup>(61)</sup>

Meanwhile Stapulensis' commentary on the Psalms and the Pauline Epistles had led him into debate with Erasmus. Though Paris had lagged behind some other centres of printing in the production of revised texts of the Bible some progress here was made with the turn of the sixteenth century, and it seems probable that Stapulensis became acquainted with Erasmus' edition of Lorenzo Valla's critical notes on the Old Testament soon after it was published by Josse Bade in April 1505.<sup>(62)</sup> Erasmus later said that he was on familiar terms with Stapulensis in Paris in 1506.<sup>(63)</sup> Between 1506 and 1515 his travels took him to Italy and to England; during this period he prepared a Latin version of the Epistles and Gospels and philological notes on the whole of the New Testament, and commenced a commentary on it. When he returned to Basle in 1515 Stapulensis wrote him an admiring letter of welcome, and it seems to have been only then that he first saw Stapulensis' edition of St. Paul.<sup>(64)</sup> His own Novum Instrumentum...cum Annotationibus was first published in Basle in February 1516,<sup>(65)</sup> and the apologia commending the second edition of this work to the public in 1519 included a complimentary reference to Stapulensis. However, emphatic and even fulsome expressions of esteem for his person were occasionally coupled with somewhat sarcastic criticism of Stapulensis' scholarship in the body of the work.<sup>(66)</sup> Relations between the two men seem to have remained serene until about February 1517, but in

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the second edition of his Pauline Commentary published in Paris in 1517, Stapulensis replied to Erasmus' criticism.<sup>(67)</sup> He made some textual comments and emendations which could seem to have been adopted without acknowledgment from Erasmus' work, but in his comment circa literam on the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews he chose to take issue openly with Erasmus.<sup>(68)</sup> The passage in question was verse 6 of psalm 8, quoted in Hebrews 2; in his Quincuplex Psalterium and in the Pauline Commentary Stapulensis had rendered this as: Minuisti eum paulominus a Deo, on the basis of what he supposed to be the original Hebrew version of the psalm. Erasmus in his Novum Instrumentum had criticised this, preferring the Septuagint version which he presumed lay behind St. Jerome's Vulgate translation: 'Minuisti eum paulo minus ab angelis'. In the 1517 edition of the Pauline Commentary Stapulensis retorted that he thought he had sufficiently argued his case in his Quincuplex Psalterium, but went on to refute Erasmus' argument point by point for eight pages while still professing his esteem and admiration for him.

Part of this argument was etymological, revolving around the question of whether the Hebrew word to be translated was ELOHIM or MALACHIM, together with the question of whether the Hebrew word ME'AT, translated by the Septuagint as βραχὺ τι, and by the Vulgate as paulominus, could ever refer to time as well as to degree or amount. Stapulensis favoured ELOHIM and so translated Deo, easily dismissing the singular-plural objection, and insisted by reference to other contexts where he supposed it to occur that ME'AT could never carry a time connotation. More interesting however is the doctrinal significance he imported into the argument. He maintained that the Erasmian version expressed an inadequate Christology; without of course using that word he seemed to see a kind of inadmissible kenoticism in the expression made lower than the angels, and would not accept the explanation that this phrase referred only to Christ's human nature while on earth.



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This he saw to be a kind of Nestorianism unduly separating the two natures which are hypostatically united.<sup>(69)</sup> For the present study this argument is mainly of interest from two points of view: it provides an example of the extreme fascination which the concept of hypostatic union had for Stapulensis, and offers illustration of his method of exegesis in using one passage of scripture to illuminate another.<sup>(70)</sup> He produced several instances, and most tellingly, the subsequent lines of the same psalm, to demonstrate that the subject referred to in the controverted passage must be taken as the one person, or hypostasis, of Christ equally divine with the Father, and not merely as the assumed human nature.

He was perhaps unprepared for the reaction he provoked, possibly unaware of what a touchy character Erasmus could be; the latter was bitterly offended by what he took to be an implied accusation of heresy, which was doubtless unjustified. Stapulensis' scholarship had not the breadth and balance of Erasmus', and he does seem to have read too much into the psalm version he rejected, carried away by his enthusiasm for using the Hebrew original.<sup>(71)</sup> The reaction of Erasmus however would seem to be out of all proportion to the original dispute; in the three weeks between 5th and 25th August 1517 he wrote a lengthy Apologia defending himself against the charge of heresy, and repeatedly demanded that Stapulensis should withdraw his criticisms, or publish some further letter softening his views and explaining that the matter was merely one of academic discussion.<sup>(72)</sup> Stapulensis remained steadfastly silent, neither withdrawing what he had written nor publishing anything further.<sup>(73)</sup> Not so Erasmus. It almost seems that it was Stapulensis' refusal to "come out and fight" that nettled him most, for he mentioned the dispute in no less than thirty-five letters to various friends and acquaintances between July 1517 and April 1518, and several of these included a disgruntled comment on Stapulensis' silence.<sup>(74)</sup> The dispute did not betray Erasmus in a very flattering light, though he was certainly the better scholar of the two, and Stapulensis emerged from the affair with greater dignity.<sup>(75)</sup>

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One curious feature of the dispute is the dating of the relevant works. Erasmus' Novum Instrumentum appeared in February 1516; Stapulensis' second edition of his Pauline Commentary, which included the corollorarium notae on Hebrews 2, is dated 1515 in a colophon on folio 258.<sup>(76)</sup> In his Apologia ad Fabrum and in a letter to Thomas More Erasmus accused Stapulensis of deliberately antedating the work to disguise the fact that he had adopted some of Erasmus' corrections in his own translation, an accusation which More uncritically accepted and commented on with amusement.<sup>(77)</sup> The editor of the Toronto edition of Erasmus' letters accepts the same accusation but tries to soften it by suggesting that Stapulensis' illness in 1516 had somewhat affected his clarity of mind.<sup>(78)</sup> Such accusations are totally incredible in view of the fact that Stapulensis explicitly quoted the Annotationes of the Novum Instrumentum, with Erasmus' name, repeatedly and exactly at considerable length in his corollorarium notae. Even a sick man would hardly be stupid enough to expect anyone to believe an anticipated date in these circumstances. It seems more likely that the 1515 colophon is a mistake, probably due to the fact that the original typesetting for this edition was completed, or at least commenced, in 1515. When Stapulensis decided to insert the corollorarium notae in the last but one section of the book, the printer presumably did not bother to alter the typesetting of the rest of that section, which would have been unaffected by the insertion, except for the numeration of its folios which has been corrected.<sup>(79)</sup> Mutual esteem between the two men seems to have survived though relations were not intimate.<sup>(80)</sup> Stapulensis retained a respect for Erasmus' scholarship, and the opposition and harassment that Erasmus encountered over the next ten years in the cause of humanist studies gave him a good deal in common with Stapulensis. When he had been attacked by the Sorbonne in 1516 Erasmus had defended his own scriptural work by citing the example of Stapulensis' correction of the Vulgate.<sup>(81)</sup> He dis-

claimed any jealousy of Stapulensis, spoke admiringly of



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him, and in 1519 even defended him in a letter to John Fisher, one of Stapulensis' major opponents in the Magdalen controversy.<sup>(82)</sup> On a number of occasions Erasmus coupled Stapulensis' name with his own in pleading for scholarly freedom and in defence of humanist studies, though he did once remark that he had encountered more unjustified harassment than Stapulensis, since Bédac had some cause for complaint in the latter's case.<sup>(83)</sup> The two men met again in Basle in 1526 during Stapulensis' flight from Meaux, but there is little evidence to indicate what their relationship was like by then.<sup>(84)</sup>

In 1516 Stapulensis seems to have suffered some kind of serious illness but evidence about it is ambiguous. In April he was visited by Symphorien Champier and was apparently in normal health, yet Thomas Grey who visited him in July or early August found him so worn out as to seem near to death.<sup>(85)</sup> In early September Stapulensis sent a message to Erasmus by Beatus Rhenanus saying that he was himself too ill to write, and in October professed himself too ill even to dictate a letter.<sup>(86)</sup> Christmas 1516 however saw Josse Bade's printing of further works of Ramon Lull, to which Stapulensis had written the preface, though of course this might have been ready months beforehand.<sup>(87)</sup> He did write a preface dated 7th January 1516/7 for an edition of Euclid's Geometry printed by Estienne in that year.<sup>(88)</sup> In May Mathurin Alamande complained of receiving no reply to a letter to Stapulensis, but a description of the latter in August suggests that he was again in normal health.<sup>(89)</sup> Since a year later in August 1518 he was again saying: "I am now so weak from enduring great labour that I can hardly bear the least annoyance", it might be inferred that the previous year's illness was also merely exhaustion from overwork.<sup>(90)</sup> In 1505 he had described how he had been dissuaded, fourteen years earlier, from entering a monastery among other things by his weak health which was easily exhausted by much work, and how this caused sleeplessness which in turn aggravated

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his weakness.<sup>(91)</sup> It seems clear that he did have a somewhat delicate constitution liable to periods of exhaustion, or perhaps that he was something of a hypochondriac.

If Stapulensis was liable to suffer strain from the scholarly activities in which he engaged, the third area of controversy in which he was involved from 1517 to 1519, the Magdalen dispute, must have tried him sorely, and might even have contributed to his decision to retire from St. Germain-des-Prés to Meaux. A relatively minor incident caused him to become involved in a dispute which, like the Reuchlin affair, was rather a paradigm case of conflict between the analytical and critical attitude of humanist reformers and the obscurantist traditionalism of some authorities in the Sorbonne. In January 1516 Queen Louise of Savoy and her daughter Marguerite made a pilgrimage to the popular shrine of St. Mary Magdalen at Ste. Baume.<sup>(92)</sup> This led her to request a life of St. Mary Magdalen from her son's tutor, François de Moulin de Rochefort, who passed the request on to his old teacher and friend, Stapulensis.<sup>(93)</sup> The result was the publication early in 1517/8, with a reprint later in the same year, of his treatise: De Maria Magdalena et de Triduo Christi Disceptatio, a short work of a primarily exegetical nature in which he examined and presented the gospel material in a way that led him to the conclusion that the popularly venerated saint, Mary Magdalen, was in fact a conflation of three different women mentioned in the gospels.<sup>(94)</sup> The part played by one of these women in the resurrection stories further led him to discuss how Christ could be said in the Creed to have risen on the third day, yet also according to the gospel narratives, to have risen before dawn on the first day of the week. Stapulensis was not the first to broach these questions but his pamphlet does seem to have stimulated more immediate controversy than previous essays in the field.<sup>(95)</sup> The first opponent in print was Marc de Grandval who published his Apologiae in September 1518, but more



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formidable in status and reputation was John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who joined issue with Stapulensis in February 1519 in his work De Unica Magdalena. These reactions provoked a number of Stapulensis' friends to enter the debate in his defence, and the pamphlet war raged throughout 1519 with John Fisher returning twice more to the attack.<sup>(96)</sup>

Though much less aggressive in tone than some of his would-be champions Stapulensis stuck to his position, and developed it somewhat in two further publications, while maintaining that he was discussing and not defining the matter in question.<sup>(97)</sup> In 1519 a third reprint of the original Disceptatio added an index of the arguments at the end of the work, and a new edition, the Disceptatio Secunda also dated 1519 considerably expanded the original text by including a defence of his method of argument and some refinement of his scriptural exegesis.<sup>(98)</sup> This was his own last contribution to the pamphlet war, though some of his partisans continued it into 1521; his silence might have been partly prompted by the attack made on him in November 1519 by Noel Beda, now Syndic of the Sorbonne, who turned out to be a far more dangerous opponent than the Bishop of Rochester.<sup>(99)</sup> Other partisans replied to Beda, but in November 1521 the Sorbonne drew up a formal condemnation of the three-Magdalen view which seems to have been the opening salvo in the harassment which would eventually drive Stapulensis to Strasbourg in flight in 1525.<sup>(100)</sup>

The Magdalen dispute is material to Stapulensis' ecclesiology since it led him to contrast what he conceived to be popular corruptions of the church's teaching with what he saw as her true and authentic teaching. The former he found in some parts of the liturgy and the excesses of some popular devotions; the latter he found in the study of scripture read and interpreted according to his own criteria for exegesis.<sup>(101)</sup> He constantly protested his loyalty to the church as the mother of truth, and asserted that scripture must be read in the church and not apart from it, though he did

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claim that the biblical writings were believed because of their own intrinsic authority and not because of the authority of the church commending them.<sup>(102)</sup> This distinction between the corrupt face of the church and the church in its integrity was real and clear to Stapulensis, a distinction which he could operate in the conduct of his own life, but in this he was unlike many of his contemporaries who saw rejection of some current popular version of the church's teaching as synonymous with rejection of the church itself.<sup>(103)</sup> His subtle distinction extended also to particular details of the argument in question; Stapulensis insisted that the Magdalen affair was an historical question and not a matter of faith and so open to further investigation, and he further distinguished various levels of authority among the sources of the church's teaching and tradition. Such hermeneutical principles were not entirely new, but they were not yet widely diffused or accepted. In 1519 they were viewed with extreme suspicion by some as an unjustified extension of human reasoning into a domain not properly subject to it. In his Gospel Commentary published in 1522 Stapulensis still maintained this stance, but did balance it with an assertion of the primacy of charity.<sup>(104)</sup>

The epithet "Lutheran" thrown at Stapulensis as a result of this dispute may have seemed justified on the grounds of a serious rejection of the church's authority, and the undeniable primacy attributed to a literal exegesis of the scriptural text over all other authorities might have lent colour to that accusation. This advocacy of a return to scripture as the primary source of enlightenment, spiritual nourishment and authoritative teaching was to be the characteristic of all Stapulensis' later life and work, but for him such a primacy of scripture posed no threat to the externally structured and established church, as will be seen in later chapters of the present study. He saw no inconsistency between his professions of loyalty and his maintenance of his own position about the Magdalen, and he seems to have been quite sincere in his contention that a fearless and



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persistent search for truth was a real service to the church.<sup>(105)</sup> He also seems to have been sincere, or at least consistent, in his genuine dislike of controversy, possibly the reason for his retirement from the public debate of the Magdalen question in 1519.<sup>(106)</sup> As in the case of the Erasmian dispute he may have been surprised at the degree of controversy his work had provoked. While this affair was contemporaneous with the early stages of the Lutheran controversy, there is no evidence that that had any influence on Stapulensis' own behaviour, though it presumably helped to polarise the general situation.

Though Stapulensis' name was coupled with that of Luther there seems to be no evidence that the two men ever met face to face. The chief connection between them was their mutual interest in the study of the psalms in the decade 1509-19. The first edition of Stapulensis' Quincuplex Psalterium appeared in 1509 and the second in 1513. Luther prepared and delivered his first course of lectures on the psalms at Wittenberg between 1513 and 1515, and there is evidence that he made some use of Stapulensis' text.<sup>(107)</sup> Certainly his interpretation of the earlier psalms adopted the same Christological starting-point as did Stapulensis' which was in line with the traditional mediaeval approach. It has been suggested however that a clear change of view can be detected in Luther's interpretation which marks a point of departure from the mediaeval tradition of exegesis, and which can be specifically dated as having occurred early in 1515.<sup>(108)</sup> After this his outlook and sympathy would seem to have diverged from those of Stapulensis, and the few references which occur in his letters seem to confirm this. In 1516 Luther remarked on Stapulensis' "lack of understanding of the interpretation of scripture", and in 1517 he commented that Erasmus was "even more ignorant than Stapulensis on the subject of Christ and the grace of God". It would seem that thereafter he took little interest in Stapulensis or his work.<sup>(109)</sup>

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Stapulensis however retained his interest in the German reformers: a letter of 1519 includes his greeting to "those others whom I love in Christ, even Luther", and he continued to seek and read works emanating from Germany at least until 1524.<sup>(110)</sup> Though Luther's own name only seems to recur once more, it seems possible that Stapulensis did read the reformation treatises of 1520-1, and might even have been stimulated by them in his own pastoral reform work at Meaux.<sup>(111)</sup>

Stapulensis' name was constantly linked with that of Luther from 1520 onwards when the condemnation of the latter stirred up serious heresy-hunting in France as well as other parts of Europe, until 1526 when the firm protection of Francis I shielded Stapulensis from further harassment.<sup>(112)</sup> His practice of making no secret of his interest in, and admiration for the work of the German reformers may seem more obviously imprudent to the judgement of a later age than it did to him then. Though Luther may have seen clearly how much their respective reforming tendencies differed the polarised positions of evangelical Catholic reformers and Protestant reformers were not so apparent to all contemporaries. Again, while Stapulensis would have accepted the judgement of the church in the case of actual excommunication, it would not necessarily have led him to condemn or abandon as dangerous what he saw to be of value in the works of other reformers, or even in the other writings of Luther himself. As in the case of Reuchlin he had made a distinction between an academic decision of a university commission, and a judicial decision of the legitimate authorities of the church, so he would be capable of applying the same distinction to the Sorbonne's condemnation of his own works because of their supposed "Lutheranism", and of refusing to be deterred by it from his study of reformist literature.<sup>(113)</sup> His later interests however led him in other directions from those of the German reformers, and his association with Luther is not a significant interlude in his own life. Study of his influence on the later stages of the



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Reformation might perhaps reveal that his work was of more significance than has been previously realised.

One curious incident of this period of Stapulensis' life remains ambiguous in its significance. In 1519 he commenced an edition of the lives of the saints arranged according to the liturgical calendar, but abandoned this after completing only the first two months.<sup>(114)</sup> He himself has left no reason for this abrupt cessation of the work, and the only explanation we have comes from the, possibly biased, pen of Farel thirty years later in 1548; he wrote that Stapulensis abandoned the work when someone convinced him of how superstitious and wrong was the practice of devotion to the saints.<sup>(115)</sup> It seems possible that the real reason may have been a little more complex than Farel suggested. It is true that Stapulensis has passages in several of his works deploring mechanical and superstitious devotional practices which he would have liked to see corrected and reduced to their context and proportions by a vivid faith in Christ; in the same year, 1519, however, he edited the Contemplationes Idiotae in response to Bishop Michel Briçonnet's request for some devotional reading.<sup>(116)</sup> Part of this work consisted of material typical of the high mediaeval devotion to the Blessed Virgin and Stapulensis' dedicatory letter implies that he himself remained appreciative of the character and value of such material.<sup>(117)</sup> It is true, however, that this was the last non-scriptural work of his life.

Some time in 1518 Stapulensis ceased to be permanently resident at St. Germain-des-Prés though he remained in the Paris region; by 1521 he had followed Briçonnet to his diocese of Meaux where he became director of the leper hospital and the Bishop's vicar-general in spirituals.<sup>(118)</sup> The move seems to be connected with Briçonnet's decision to embark on a reform of his diocese; he had become bishop of Meaux in 1516, and had almost immediately gone to Rome as envoy of King Francis I. Perhaps this enabled him to see something of the work of bishops like Gian Matteo Giberti of Verona, who took

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seriously the reform decrees of the Fifth Lateran Council.<sup>(119)</sup> On his return in the autumn of 1517 he took up residence in his diocese, and initiated a programme of reform which got under way with his own official visitation commencing on the day after Corpus Christi in 1518.<sup>(120)</sup> His plans for reform were announced in a synodal sermon of 1519, which was printed (and presumably further distributed) in 1520.<sup>(121)</sup> He attempted to insist on the residence of clergy in their cures; he restricted the preaching and questing of the mendicant Cordeliers, and prohibited their exhibition of images of the stigmata of St. Francis; and he further divided the diocese into a number of preaching stations to be served only by preachers licenced by himself.<sup>(122)</sup> Among these preachers he introduced a number of notable evangelical reformers who had been companions of Stapulensis at St. Germain-des-Prés.<sup>(123)</sup> He himself preached regularly in his cathedral and elsewhere.<sup>(124)</sup> His employment of Stapulensis as Vicar General in spirituals from 1523 may have been part of this programme as the latter already commanded his respect as a spiritual adviser; in a letter of 1523 Briçonnet referred Marguerite of Angoulême, with whom he maintained a long spiritual correspondence over several years, to Stapulensis for advice.<sup>(125)</sup> Settled at Meaux Stapulensis recommenced his scriptural study after a ten-year gap since the publication of his Pauline Commentary in 1512. In 1522 he produced his Commentary on the Gospels, and in 1523 his translation of the New Testament into French appeared in two parts, printed in Paris by the favour of, and at the expense of Queen Louise and Marguerite.<sup>(126)</sup> Though Stapulensis already had his own reasons for being interested in scripture, the Meaux reform programme seems to have been a further stimulus to him, and his work, in its turn, an integral part of that reform. In 1524 Briçonnet was distributing copies of his French New Testament free to those of his flock who could not afford it.<sup>(127)</sup> In the same year the Bishop established a system of public



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reading of scripture, though he prohibited uncontrolled discussion of scriptural texts.<sup>(128)</sup> In 1524 also Stapulensis produced his edition of the Psalter in French, with a second edition in 1525, a Latin Psalter with a commentary and critical apparatus, and began work on his Commentary on the Catholic Epistles, though this latter was not printed until 1527.<sup>(129)</sup> Perhaps the most significant work of this period is the French translation of Sunday Epistles and Gospels; it would seem to be obviously connected with the pastoral and evangelical reform movement instigated by Briçonnet, since it provided a vernacular version of the Sunday readings with a homily annexed to each, for the benefit of those priests who could not, or would not, preach a suitably evangelical homily of their own.<sup>(130)</sup>

Such activity did not go unchallenged by the authorities of the Sorbonne, who were already suspicious of, or rather hostile to, Stapulensis. A vigorous retort to his work on the Magdalen question had been made by Beda in 1519, although a further Determinatio in 1521 was impeded by King Francis I, after Stapulensis had been described as antichrist, along with Erasmus Reuchlin and Luther, in the King's presence.<sup>(131)</sup> From 1518 onwards the Sorbonne had been worried by the spread of Lutheran ideas in France, and instituted various counter measures; by 1522 these extended to accusations against specific people whose status or rank was no safeguard against such attack, since Michel d'Arande, preacher and confessor to Queen Louise, was cited in November 1522.<sup>(132)</sup> It was inevitable that the attack should extend to Briçonnet and the circle of reforming preachers and writers at Meaux, including Stapulensis. Accusations probably first came from the disgruntled Cordeliers many of whom Briçonnet had removed from their preaching positions, who complained to the Parlement about the "reforming preachers" who had replaced them, with vague accusations of "Lutheranism".<sup>(133)</sup> Briçonnet heeded these accusations to the extent of cancelling all preaching commissions in 1523, thus forcing even his own

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men to seek fresh licences from him.<sup>(134)</sup> It seems possible that his hesitation to renew Guillaume Farel's commission precipitated the latter's departure to the more congenial atmosphere of Basle at this time.<sup>(135)</sup>

On 18 March 1521, in response to a request from the rector of the University of Paris, Francis I had instructed the Parlement to forbid the printing of books on religious questions without prior inspection by the Sorbonne or its deputies, and on 8 April the booksellers were duly informed of this measure which was enrolled on 13 June.<sup>(136)</sup> On 3 August Parlement ordered the surrender of all "Lutheran" books within eight days by libraries, printers and booksellers.<sup>(137)</sup> It was these decrees that were to be the Sorbonne's most useful instrument of attack on Stapulensis. His Gospel Commentary printed in 1522 was made the subject of such an inquisition, and the Sorbonne refused to suspend the enquiry in spite of a royal command that they should do so in May 1523.<sup>(138)</sup> On 8 June 1523 the Gospels in French, first part of the French translation of the New Testament, appeared, and remarks in the prefatory letter about the need for vernacular bibles may well have provoked the debate which started on 12 August with the Sorbonne's enunciation that such translations were to be prohibited as harmful, and which was still in progress two years later when the Parlement was grudgingly persuaded to enrol a decree to that effect.<sup>(139)</sup> Though the French New Testament was published at the request of Queen Louise, the Sorbonne still insisted on censuring parts of the Gospel Commentary, but on 11 June the King transferred the whole question from the jurisdiction of the Parlement to that of the Grand Conseil, a move which had the effect of offering Stapulensis some protection but of considerably irritating his opponents.<sup>(140)</sup> On 16 June the Sorbonne extracted a series of statements worthy of censure from "some recent suspect works on the Gospels", presumably Stapulensis' Commentary; in July Parlement ordered an inquisition into the activity of printers and book-



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sellers under the terms of the 1521 decree, and on 14 August the Sorbonne presented a remonstrance to the King concerning the examination of Stapulensis' works.<sup>(141)</sup> The boldness of the Sorbonne at this time, in the face of the King's obstructionist attitude, may have derived some encouragement from the approach made to it in September 1523 by Queen Louise in connection with measures to arrest the spread of heresy in France; certainly it was becoming more formal and determined in its procedures under the leadership of Noel Beda.<sup>(142)</sup> At the end of 1523 the Sorbonne arrived at a Determinatio concerning "certain propositions recently put to it" which amounted to serious accusations of heterodoxy in the reform movement at Meaux.<sup>(143)</sup> The intervention of the King on 3 November, in favour of Erasmus whose scriptural works were also under scrutiny, caused the Sorbonne to suspend publication of that Determinatio.<sup>(144)</sup>

For a few more months the activities of Briçonnet and Stapulensis could continue unhindered. On 16 February 1524 the French Psalter appeared, incorporating an exhortatory letter on how to pray devoutly, and a number of the evangelical preachers remained in the diocese.<sup>(145)</sup> Though Gerard Roussel showed signs of discouragement, Stapulensis seems to have remained optimistic for a while longer about the success of an evangelical reform.<sup>(146)</sup> Nor did he moderate his interest in reform movements elsewhere, maintaining a correspondence with Farel in Basle (though not approving of everything he wrote) and eagerly seeking news and possession of reformist writings.<sup>(147)</sup>

The delations made to the Sorbonne at the end of 1523, again by the Cordeliers, could not be entirely ignored. Briçonnet attempted to respond to them in October with a synodal decree which condemned even the possession of Luther's writings (a decree which does not seem have affected Stapulensis!) reaffirmed the validity of invoking the Blessed Virgin and the saints, and reasserted the existence of purgatory; and he

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continued to denounce "false doctrines" from the pulpit in the ensuing months.<sup>(148)</sup> Apparently these measures were not enough to allay suspicion for when he commenced a further visitation of his diocese on 29 March 1524 to reiterate them more widely he was accompanied by officers from the Parlement.<sup>(149)</sup> It seems that in some places he met with violent opposition but offenders were duly excommunicated.<sup>(150)</sup> Nevertheless in August or September Briçonnet, Stapulensis, Pierre Caroli, Martial Mazurier and Gerard Roussel were all accused of heresy, and in March 1525 were required to answer formal charges.<sup>(151)</sup> These charges concerned the points already mentioned: the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the saints and the existence of Purgatory, since these had a bearing on the doctrine concerning the means of salvation; evidently the evangelical preaching of the Meaux circle could be made to sound like Luther's preaching of salvation by faith alone, and no doubt Stapulensis' scriptural work seemed to be teaching the same thing.<sup>(152)</sup> There was a suggestion too that the Meaux preachers were undermining the authority of the Church; according to his accusers Briçonnet maintained that the church could not bind Christians to anything not contained in the Gospels.<sup>(153)</sup> The case of the Cordeliers against Briçonnet and his preachers occupied the Parlement from 24 July to 1 September 1525.<sup>(154)</sup> At the same time the Sorbonne continued its attack on the production and use of vernacular versions of the scriptures, determining formally on 26 August 1525 that "such versions should not be tolerated, but on the contrary suppressed in the most Christian kingdom of France", a decree that was duly registered by the Parlement on 28 August, thus providing a further handle for pursuit of the Meaux reformers.<sup>(155)</sup> On 1 September a number of the group, Briçonnet, Caroli, Mazurier, Roussel, Nicolas Mangin, Jean Prevost and Stapulensis himself, were cited to appear before the inquisitorial commission which Louise of Savoy had caused to be established for the extirpation of heresy.<sup>(156)</sup>



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Occupied with his Italian wars Francis I had in fact been a prisoner in Madrid since August, and Louise as regent took her duty of safeguarding the faith very seriously. Briçonnet demanded a hearing before the whole Parlement and was refused this, but he seems to have cleared himself sufficiently when interrogated by the commission in December.<sup>(157)</sup> Some others made abjurations.<sup>(158)</sup> Much of Stapulensis' scriptural work was condemned to be burnt: the French New Testament, the Gospel Commentary, the French Psalter, a further edition of which had been printed at Antwerp in 1524, and the Sunday Epistles and Gospels.<sup>(159)</sup> He was cited to appear in person, but together with Roussel and Caroli he fled to Strasbourg in October 1525.<sup>(160)</sup> The commission pursued some of the accused with continued zeal: Caroli, Prévost and Roussel were "to be taken wherever they are found, even in sanctuary", a point which may explain the adoption by the refugees in Strasbourg of aliases.<sup>(161)</sup> At this point Francis I intervened even from his prison in Madrid; a letter of 12 November 1525 prohibited any further harassment of Stapulensis, and transferred the case of Caroli and Roussel to his own council.<sup>(162)</sup> On 2 January 1526 the Grand Conseil gave judgement in the case brought by the Cordeliers against Briçonnet; the procurator for the King required the Bishop to make a written response to the charges within fifteen days, which seems to have amounted to a dismissal of the accusations against him. The fact that the whole Briçonnet family were still persona grata at court, and that his eldest brother Jean Briçonnet was president of the Parlement may have contributed to this result. The council formally reiterated the decrees against the production or dissemination of Lutheran books, but none of these decrees was registered by the Parlement until November.<sup>(163)</sup> On 5 February 1526 the Parlement repeated the prohibition of vernacular translations of the scriptures and forbade all discussion about religion.<sup>(164)</sup>

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Stapulensis and his companions spent about five months in Strasbourg where they were welcomed into his house by Wolfgang Capito and met Martin Bucer and Sigismund of Hohenloe.<sup>(165)</sup> They further came into contact with a circle of friends and acquaintances who included Farel, Jean Vedaste, Simon of Tournai, Michel d'Arande, Henri Cornelius Agrippa and Otto Brunfels.<sup>(166)</sup> Undoubtedly association with this circle helped to attach the label "heretic" or "Lutheran" to Stapulensis for the rest of his life notwithstanding the discernible difference in his own theological position.<sup>(167)</sup> Despite the adoption of aliases, the presence of the exiles seems to have been an open secret. A glowing account of the regime followed in Strasbourg survives, written by Roussel to Briçonnet in December 1525; there seems to have been considerable emphasis on the study of scripture for all classes of folk, public discussions and conferences, interspersed with a simple vernacular liturgy of prayers, hymns, psalms and a much-simplified communion service; Roussel evidently enjoyed it and felt at home there.<sup>(168)</sup> Though we must assume that Stapulensis also observed these things and probably participated to some extent, we have no indication at all of his own reaction to them.<sup>(169)</sup> The exiles must also have found themselves at least on the fringes of the Eucharistic controversy for Farel was deploring this in a letter to Johann Bugenhagen Pomeranus in October 1525, and by December 1526 Roussel was apprehensive about Farel's views on this topic should he return to France.<sup>(170)</sup> Again we have no indication at all of Stapulensis' own reaction either to the Eucharistic liturgy he witnessed or to the controversy about this subject, beyond what can be gleaned from his subsequent writings.<sup>(171)</sup> Stapulensis also occupied himself with the work of scriptural translation while he was in Strasbourg, and seems to have commenced his translation of the whole bible into French at that time, though the project was not completed until 1530.<sup>(172)</sup> The dedicatory letter of the Commentary on the Catholic Epistles is dated April 1525, but since the book was not published



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until 1527 in Basle, it is possible that he was still working on this too while he was in Strasbourg. The foundations of some of his later linguistic and grammatical work may also have been laid there.<sup>(173)</sup> About the middle of April 1526 Stapulensis moved from Strasbourg to Basle where he visited Jean Oecolampadius and Erasmus.<sup>(174)</sup> Again we have no explicit reflections of his own on the people he met, or the circumstances he encountered during these months of exile, and we can only conjecture from his latest writings what effect the experience may have had on him.

In March 1526 Francis I was released from captivity in Madrid and returned to Paris with his sister Marguerite; shortly after this he recalled Stapulensis and Roussel and took them officially under his own protection.<sup>(175)</sup> He also reversed the Parlement's February decree prohibiting vernacular translations of the scriptures and religious discussion.<sup>(176)</sup> By July Stapulensis was installed at the royal court at Blois where he officially filled the post of librarian, and apparently tutor to the royal children.<sup>(177)</sup> The Meaux circle of reformers was now scattered but Stapulensis continued his scriptural work to the end of his life in a quiet way.<sup>(178)</sup> His Commentary on the Catholic Epistles was printed at Basle in 1527 and the first part of his French translation of the Old Testament at Antwerp in 1528.<sup>(179)</sup> An annotated Musical Psalter which appeared in the same year is attributed to him, as are the Grammatographia, the Vocabulary of the Psalter, and the Brief Instruction of 1529.<sup>(180)</sup> His final major work, the translation of the whole bible into French appeared in 1530, with a second edition in 1534.<sup>(181)</sup>

Even these last years of work were not entirely free from annoyance. It is to be noticed that many of these later works were printed outside France, though some reprints, such as the third edition of the French Psalter on 17 February 1526, did come from Simon de Colines in Paris. In 1531 the Sorbonne censured French texts emanating from the press of Martin Keyser in Antwerp, but this

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seems to have had little effect in practice.<sup>(182)</sup> Noël Beda continued his attack with the publication of his Annotaciones in 1526, in which among other things he accused Stapulensis of Arianism, derided him for not being a theologian, and claimed that his teaching about penitence had been influenced by Luther.<sup>(183)</sup> From 20 November to 14 December that year Beda and the Sorbonne discussed censurable propositions from Stapulensis' work for presentation by way of remonstrance to the King and other members of the royal court, though the text of this remonstrance was never finally registered.<sup>(184)</sup> By this time, however, Beda had overshot his mark. On 9 July 1527 the King formally complained to the whole university of Paris about the failure of the Sorbonne to abide by his orders, and forbade any further pursuit of the case against Stapulensis, (and also Erasmus and Louis Berquin). Moreover Beda was summoned to defend his own writings before an episcopal commission.<sup>(185)</sup> He still did not relinquish his fight against the humanist reformers, however, and in 1529 published his Apologia attacking the "clandestine Lutherans" at Meaux.<sup>(186)</sup> He was exiled in 1533 for an attack on the preaching of Roussel and imprisoned in 1534 for his part in a tract attacking the King which led to public penance in 1535 and further exile until his death in 1537.<sup>(187)</sup>

Though Stapulensis enjoyed the King's protection, Francis I's position did not remain such as to allow him complete freedom in favouring humanist reformers.<sup>(188)</sup> The inquisitorial commission set up by Louise of Savoy in 1525 and disbanded in January 1527, was replaced by a commission of bishops; a council at Sens in 1528 passed further decrees concerning the pursuit of heretics, while one held in Bourges in the same year attempted to define the role of the bishop in relation to that of the Sorbonne in this matter.<sup>(189)</sup> The slight rapprochement apparent between Pope Clement VII and Francis I after 1527 may have had some bearing on a final attempt made to clear Stapulensis' reputation of the taint of



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heresy, and possibly contributed to his decision to (190)  
 retire to the court of Marguerite at Nérac about 1530.  
 Little information survives about these final accusa-  
 tions of heresy, so the detailed situation is unclear.  
 A letter from Cardinal Campeggio, legate to Charles V  
 in Brussels, dated 19 October 1531, and addressed to  
 Giacomo Salviati, private secretary to Clement VII,  
 included the information that the writer was unable to  
 deliver a letter to Stapulensis because he could not  
 find him. The undelivered letter appears to have been a  
 diplomatic request from Cardinal Cajetan to Stapulensis  
 to visit him in some discreet manner. A letter from  
 Aleander addressed to Gian Battista Sanga on 26 December  
 1531 described a conversation between Stapulensis and  
 Jean de Quintan the confessor of Charles V, and as a  
 result summed up Stapulensis' errors as "few and slight",  
 "novelties rather than serious matters", and there was  
 suggestion of persuading Stapulensis to write a slight  
 retraction, and to come to Italy away from the influence  
 of Roussel. Sanga replied by agreeing in principle,  
 but pointed out that it would be difficult to get  
 Stapulensis out of France without offending the Sorbonne  
 and King Francis I, with whom Clement VII was even then  
 carrying on negotiations. It would appear that nothing  
 further came of these plans. (191)

At Nérac, where he must by then have been an old  
 man, Stapulensis' interest in evangelical reform did not  
 disappear, for the 1534 edition of the French Bible  
 contained significant additional matter, though it is  
 not clear how much of this should be attributed to  
 Stapulensis' own authorship. (192)

Stapulensis' reputation was such that he was visited  
 in 1533 by the young John Calvin, who may have been some-  
 what disillusioned by what seemed to him the indecisive  
 attitude of the older man. (193) Farel also credited  
 Stapulensis with some late regrets in his final years  
 about his ambivalent position in the reform movement,  
 but evidence for these utterances is perhaps ambiguous. (194)

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Certainly the religious position in France during the final years of his life was a complex one, with Francis I apparently playing a double game. Nicolas Cop's rectorial address on 1 November 1533 stimulated the King to make further representations to Parlement about the extirpation of Lutheranism on 10 December 1533, yet in January 1534 he was negotiating a secret treaty with the Protestant princes against the House of Austria, and during the Spring and Summer of that year he sent envoys to Switzerland to negotiate peace among the dissident Christians there.<sup>(195)</sup> His attitude seemed enigmatic to contemporary observers; in January Martin Bucer anticipated a reproduction of the Spanish Inquisition in France, but by June was remarking that gentler things were now coming out of France, while Guillaume du Bellay wrote to Bucer of how favourable the King was becoming towards humanist studies.<sup>(196)</sup> The publication of the second edition of Stapulensis' French Bible more or less coincided with the affair of the Placards in Paris, which signalled the start of a much more bloody and intolerant era in France. The two most irenic of the Meaux reformers were probably fortunate not to live on into the middle of the century; Bishop Briçonnet died on 24 January 1534, and Stapulensis in 1536 or early 1537.<sup>(197)</sup>



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## FOOTNOTES

- (1) The first scholar of the modern era to study Stapulensis in any detail was Charles-Henri Graf, who published two studies, Essai sur la Vie et les Ecrits de Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples, (Strasbourg, 1842) and Jacobus Faber Stapulensis: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformation in Frankenreich; in: Zeitschrift für die Historische Theologie, (Strasburg, 1856) XXII. These will be referred to hereafter as Graf:Essai & Graf:Beitrag. These two studies underlie all subsequent works which do not refer to original sources.

In the Essai, Graf gave 1455 as the date of Stapulensis' birth, but amended this to 1450 in the Beitrag. No precise record of the date survives; the chief evidence lies in Stapulensis' own remark in his preface to Charles Bovelles, In Artem Oppositorum Introductio, published in 1501, that he was twice as old as Bovelles at the time. Bovelles is known to have been born in 1479, which would suggest a date about 1460 for Stapulensis' birth. Graf was led to surmise an earlier date by description of Stapulensis as senex in 1511, by Jerome of Pavia, coupled with the statement of Macrinus in 1537, that Stapulensis had lived for almost a century, and so to guess that he must have been about sixty years of age in 1511. Graf:Essai p.4, n.1. Augustin Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme à Paris Pendant Les Premières Guerres D'Italie, 2nd edition, (Paris, 1953) (hereafter referred to as Renaudet: Préréforme) p. 130, n.4, accepts the date of 1450. Other references to Stapulensis as senex, however, by Erasmus in a letter to John Fisher in 1519, and Theodore Beza in his Life of Calvin with reference to 1534, weaken the precise significance of the word. Eugene Rice, The Prefatory Epistles of Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples, (hereafter referred to as Rice: Prefatory Epistles) p.XII, prefers the date of 1460, influenced partly by his discussion of the evidence concerning Stapulensis' M.A.

Graf:Essai, p.6, points out that Stapulensis must have become a Master of Arts before the death of Argyropolous in 1486 since he had been his pupil, according to a letter from Beatus Rhenanus to Reuchlin written on 10 November 1509. Rice: Prefatory Epistles, p.XII, n.4, accepts the entry in the Register of the Picard nation of the University of Paris, ms.9 (11), fol.86r, concerning Dominus Jacobus Fabri, as referring to Stapulensis, though the editors of the register refer it to another Jacobus Faber later active in the medical faculty. Rice points out that if Stapulensis' date of birth was c.1460, his M.A., twenty years later would be quite plausible.

No evidence survives at all concerning Stapulensis' priestly ordination; it is presumed that he was ordained somewhere about the time of his attaining his M.A. Had he not been a priest the



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fact would surely have been mentioned to his detriment, as was his lack of formal theological qualifications, by Noel Beda, Annotationes in Fabrum et Erasmus, 1526. See below note (183). It is also presumed that he belonged to the Cardinal Lemoine college, since that was associated with the Picard nation, to which Stapulensis belonged by birth.

For a fuller discussion of the evidence concerning his early academic career, see: V. Carrière, Lefèvre d'Etaples à l'Université de Paris, in Etudes Historiques Dédiées à la Mémoire de M. Roger Rodière, (1947) Arras, pp. 107-120.

- (2) The date of Stapulensis' death is also not precisely recorded. Graf:Essai p.4, note 1, gives 1537, while Renaudet:Préreform p.130, note 4, gives 1536. It must have been before the publication of Solomon Macrinus, Hymnorum Libri Sex, (Paris, 1537), since the statement that he had lived nearly a century occurs there, Bk.III, p.119.
- (3) Totius Aristotelis Philosophiae Naturalis Paraphrases, (Paris, Jean Higman, 1492). His 1515 edition of Aristotle's Metaphysics mentions the date of 1490 for the first edition on fol.125 r.
- (4) In Politica Aristotelis Introductio; Oeconomicon Xenophontis a Raphaele Volterrano traductum, (Paris, Henri Estienne, 28 September 1508).
- (5) E.g; Johannes Hess, Fribourg in Briesgau, 18 March 1509, to Bruno Amerbach: "... Placet summe, quicquid ex Stapulensis egreditur officina, (veneror enim Magistrum Jacobum); proinde, quicquid emiserit, fac habeam..." ed. Alfred Hartmann, Die Amerbachkorrespondenz (Basle, 1942-67) vol. 1, 1.374, p.344.
- (6) It is not clear when Stapulensis studied Greek, but it seems likely that he may have learnt it from George Hermonymus, who commenced teaching in Paris in 1473. See Henri Omont, George Hermonyme de Sparte Maître de Grece Paris et copiste des manuscrits, in Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris, 1885, XII, pp. 64-98.
- (7) For further details of his philosophical career, see below, n.(46) and chapter 2.
- (8) Thomas More, 21 October 1515, Bruges, to Martin Dorp; see: Paris, Bib.Nat. MS.Lat. 8703.
- (9) See the list of his works given in the appendix to chapter 2.



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- (10) Stapulensis, Paris 10 February 1504, to Jacobus Ramirius, Bishop of Catania, preface to the volume including the Paradisus Heraclidis: "... Primum namque magia ludificamenta confutat... nam profecto nulla bona est, et figmentum est ullam esse naturalem ullamve bonam, et eorum qui sub honesto nomine nequitiarum suarum ad multorum perniciem velamenta quaerunt...".  
See also Lynn Thorndike, A History of Magic and Experimental Science, (New York 1934), Vol. IV, pp. 515-6.
- (11) See his comment on Psalm 130: "... Qui ambulare volunt in magnis and mirabilibus super se, vani quidem sunt et nimia curiositate decepti; qui post deliramenta magica consortiaque daemonum insaniunt. Qualis olim Simon Magus, Apollonius, Capocrates, et ante eos Zoroaster, Ostanes, Apuscorus, Zaratus, Marmaridius, Hippocus, Zarmoncenides monstrosa nomina qui huius infamiae nota inuruntur omnes. Et tempestate nostra, (quod magis dolendum est) sunt qui... se appellare magos aperte audeant... qui tunc etiam sua sacrilegia nomine astrologiae defendunt... Et pontifices intenti esse debent ac vigiles ne quid talium accidat....".
- (12) Stapulensis himself dated his trip to Rome by the remark in the preface to his edition of the Dialectica of George of Trebizond published in Paris in 1508, fol.2 r: "Nunc sextus decimus agitur annus, vivente adhuc Hermolao Barbaro... Romae pergrinus agebam...".  
Graf:Essai p.6, posited an earlier journey, before 1486, and he has been followed in this by some modern writers, including Rice:Prefatory Epistles. The note of A.L. Herminjard, Correspondance des Réformateurs (Geneva, 1878) 4 vols. (hereafter: Herminjard) I p.10, that this is an erroneous supposition, based on an error in his source, Bulaeus Historia Universitatis Parisiensis, (Paris 1665-73), which Graf himself had noticed, seems more probable.
- (13) See Mercurii Trismegisti Liber de Potestate et Sapientia Dei, (Paris, J. Higman and W. Hopyl, 1494), eiii v.
- (14) See Decem Librorum Moraliu Aristotelis Tres Conversiones (Paris, J. Higman & W. Hopyl, 12 April 1497), Bk.II, chapter 1, b vii r: "... Procul enim ab ipsis juvenibus sit exempla Catulli, procul molles cupidines, molles arcus mollesque pharetre, molles elegie epigrammata et lenonum comedie....".



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- (15) See Stapulensis, Epistolae Pauli, I Thess. 4,18; also Renaudet: Preréf. p.392. In view of the character of this pontiff, and of the activities current in Rome at the time of Stapulensis' visit, with Bramante's workmen engaged in the demolition of the old St. Peter's, of which he can hardly have been entirely ignorant, the lack of interest in the contemporary papacy exhibited by Stapulensis' works seems the more remarkable. See below, n.(39) and (148).
- (16) Stapulensis' edition of Cusa's works: Haec Accurata Recognitio Trium Voluminum, Operum Clarissimi Patris Nicolai Cusae Cardinalis, was printed in Paris by Josse Bade in 1514.
- (17) See Stapulensis' preface to Primum Volumen Contemplationum Remundi Duos Libros Continens: Libellus Blaquerne de Amico et Amato, (Paris, Guy Marchant for Jean Petit, 10 Dec. 1505): "... Fluxerunt anni supra quattuordecim...liber apud me mansit et plurimam mihi attulit consolationem; et paene ad hoc pertraxit, ut demisso mundo Deum in solitudine quaererem; et forsitan felix si tractum secutus executioni demandassem... Verum propositum quod conceperam (ut accidere solet) interturbaverunt plurima; dissuadebant nonnulli, partim retinebant curae et quaedam nondum absoluta studia. Dum igitur differo, dum mundi fugam protelo, desiderio tamen semper aestuans, propositum fovebam visitando sanctos opinione hominum viros... Dum res (huius exequendi propositi gratia) ad exitum premo, dum opus omne vehementius urgeo, incautum laborem morbus sequitur; hunc, gravis dormiendi necessitas; ... hanc denique insomnolentiam fastidiosa quaedam secuta est debilitas, per annos aliquot durans; sicque effectum est ut, quem maxime fugere volebam, me hac necessitate (quae nulli religioni conveniebat) quasi quibusdam pedicis implicitum mundus retinuerit ...".
- (18) Regularisation of the transfer of the abbey was the reason for the younger Briçonnet's trip to Rome, in 1507, on which Stapulensis accompanied him: see Guy Bretonneau, Histoire Généalogique de la Maison des Briçonnet (Paris, 1621), hereafter: Bretonneau; p.139-140.
- (19) See the list of his works given in the appendix to chapter 2.
- (20) i.e: the Theologia Damasceni, (Paris, Henri Estienne, 15 April 1507).



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- (21) Stapulensis' edition of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius, Theologia Vivificans, Cibus Solidus, Dionysii Celestis Hierarchia, Ecclesiastica Hierarchia, Divina Nomina, Mystica Theologia, etc. .... was printed in Paris by J. Higman and W. Hopyl on 6 Feb. 1498/9, having been edited from a manuscript Latin translation of Ambrose Traversarius of 1436, which Stapulensis found in the library of the Abbey of St. Denis; see: Guy Bédouelle, Lefèvre D'Etaples & l'Intelligence des Ecritures (Geneva, 1976) hereafter: Bédouelle:L'Intelligence); p.42.
- (22) Cf. Stapulensis' remarks about wishing to retire to a monastery, quoted in note (17). Similar sentiments are expressed at the beginning of his dedicatory letter prefacing the Quincuplex Psalterium: "... Cum omnia ferre studia voluptatis et utilitatis non nichil affere sint solita, sed sola divina non voluptatem modo et utilitatem sed summam pollicentur felicitatem... ex illa quamvis remota delibatione tanta lux affulgere visa est ut eius comparatione disciplinae humanae mihi visae sint tenebrae...".
- (23) That this was the reason for his edition of Theologia Damasceni is suggested by Augustin Renaudet, Un Problème Historique: La Pensée Religieuse de Lefèvre d'Etaples, in Humanisme et Renaissance (Geneva 1958), hereafter Renaudet:Hum. & Ren. p.209. The same work suggests that the reason why Stapulensis never proceeded to formal studies and qualifications in theology in Paris was similarly a dislike of scholastic theology and theologians, p.20.
- (24) Ricoldi Ordinis Predicatorum Contra Sectam Mahumeticam, non Indignus Scitu Libellus. Cuiusdam Diu Captivi Turcorum Provinciae Septemcastrensis, de Vita et Moribus eorundem alius non minus necessarius libellus, (Paris, Henri Estienne, 28 November 1509).
- (25) See Appendix Chapter 2.
- (26) See Graf:Essai, p.9.
- (27) Bernonis Abbatis Libellus de Officio Missae, quem edidit Rhomae (Paris, Henri Estienne, 23 November 1510).  
For comment, and mention of similar contemporary works, see Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.74, n.22.
- (28) Liber Trium Virorum et Trium Spiritualium Virginum, Hermae Liber Unus, Uguetini Liber Unus, Fratris Roberti Libri Duo, Hildegardis Scivias Libri Tres, Elizabeth Virginis Libri Sex, Mechtildis Virginis Libri Quinque (Paris, Henri Estienne, 30 May 1513).  
For some discussion of these texts, see chapter 3.



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- (29) Graf:Beitrag, p.62, followed by Herminjard I, p.5, note 2, attributes the remark to c.1512. Renaudet:Preref. p.702, note 1, places it much later c.1525. The remark was first recorded by Farel in his Epistre a Tous Seigneurs & Peuples De Vray Usage de la Croix de Jesus Christ, published in 1548.
- (30) For an account of the church in France in this period, see Renaudet:Preref.; also: P. Imbart de la Tour, Les Origines de la Réforme (2nd edition), (Melun 1946), 3 vols; hereafter: Imbart.
- (31) In 1438 the reforming decrees enacted by the "rump" of the Council of Basle were embodied in what became known as the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, at the instigation of King Charles VII of France; this assertion of control over ecclesiastical life in France was the basis of the movement subsequently known as "Gallicanism". A further upsurge of gallican reforming fervour towards the end of the century, marked especially by the Synod of Sens in 1485 which extended the Basle reform measures, encouraged King Charles VIII to consider undertaking a general reform of the Church, by compelling the Pope to summon the 10-yearly general council which had been decreed by the Council of Constance, or to convoke it in spite of him. His successor, Louis XII, accordingly summoned a gallican church council to Tours in 1510, which issued in the convocation, by three cardinals - Bernadino Lopez de Carvajal, Guillaume Briçonnet and Francisco Borgia, acting in the name of six others who had offered them written support - Rene de Prie, Frederigo Sanseverino, Philippe de Luxemborg, Adrien de Corneto, Carlo de Finale and Hippolyto d'Este, of a general council to meet at Pisa in 1511. Sessions held in 1511 & 1512 were attended, under some pressure from the King, by twenty-four French bishops and representatives of the University of Paris, whose theology faculty had originally approved the royal initiative. This conciliabulum ultimately declared the Pope contumacious when he failed to attend, indicted him and suspended him from his spiritual and temporal powers. These decrees were enrolled by the French Parlement after a final session had been held in the cathedral of Lyons on 6 July 1512.
- For a general account of these events, see Renaudet:Preref. pp. 525-556.
- For documentation, see J. Lemaire de Belges, Acta Primi Concilii Pisani ad Tollendum Schisma, anni 1409, et Concilii Senensis, 1423; item Constitutiones Factae in Concilio Pisano Secundo, anni 1512, et alia: ex mss. Bibliothecae Regiae (Paris, 1612), also J.D. Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio (Graz 1960, reprint), hereafter Mansi vol.32, col.561-578 and col.1015-1047: vol.35, col.155-170.



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- (32) A bull of Pope Julius II, Sacrosanctae, solemnly condemned the conciliabulum of Pisa on 18 July 1511; on 13 February 1511/2 participants were deprived of their titles and dignities; the Fifth Lateran Council was convoked for 19 April 1512, and commenced by annulling all the acts of the Pisa-Milan assembly on 10 May 1512. The death of Julius II on 21 February 1512/3, and the election on 11 March of Leo X caused no change in papal policy; a further bull Aeternae Vitae Claviger of 7 October 1513 excommunicated all defenders of the Pisa conciliabulum.  
- See Mansi, vol.32, col.568-78, 681-90, 714-6, 782-4.
- (33) The Sorbonne began to publish doubts about the canonicity of the Council of Pisa in January 1512/13; the schismatic cardinals who had convoked it were not permitted to participate in the conclave which elected Pope Leo X on 11 March 1512/13, and two of these, Carvajal and Sanseverino, submitted to Leo X on 25 June 1513. Though the bull excommunicating all Pisa supporters of 7 October 1513 formally exempted King Charles VIII, he renounced his patronage of the continuing group at Lyons, and expressed his acceptance of the Fifth Lateran Council on 26 October 1513, carrying fairly general support in France with him.  
- See Renaudet:Préréf. p.563.  
also Mansi, vol.32, col.814-5 and 832-8.
- (34) See Jean Labin, Lyons, 3 September 1513, to Charles Bovelles: "... Sperabam et nostrum Stapulensem et te ad Lugdunense concilium venturos..."; Philosophicae & Historicae Aliquot Epistolae (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 13 Sept. 1514) fol.74 r.
- (35) Cardinal Briçonnet seems to have been among those who still favoured a Gallican stand even after the submission of King Charles VIII, since he did not make his submission with his two fellow convoking cardinals on 25 June 1513. His son, Bishop Denis Briçonnet of Toulon, attended the eighth and ninth sessions of the Fifth Lateran Council in December 1513 and May 1514, and presented the submission of himself and his father. The general instrument for absolution of those excommunicated in connection with the Pisa assembly was dated 17 March 1514; the Briçonnets were absolved and restored to their titles on 7 April 1514.  
- See Mansi, vol.32, col.814-5, 864-7. It is not clear whether Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet of Lodève was ever excommunicated, since his name is not associated with that of his father in the absolution.  
- See Reg.Leo X, anno 1514, in O. Raynaldi, Annales Ecclesiastici post Baronium ab anno 1198 ad annum 1565, ed. J.D. Mansi, (Lucca 1756-1777) t.XLII,n.8-9. That Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet did set out for Pisa on 7 September 1511, is attested by the Acts of the Council of Lyons; see Bib.Nat.ms. Lat. 1559, fol. 16 r.



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- (36) Stapulensis mentions this himself in his preface to Euclidis:Geometricorum Elementorum Libri XV (Paris, Henri Estienne, 7 January 1516/7) all r.
- (37) The bull Sacrosanctae of 18 July 1511 condemning the convocation of a council to Pisa and announcing the convocation of the Fifth Lateran Council, had, as its main burden the condemnation of schism and heavy emphasis on the unity of the church; see Mansi vol.32, col.681.  
An intense dislike and disapproval of schism was characteristic of Stapulensis' ecclesiology as will be shown later in this thesis.
- (38) Cf. Josse Clichtove, De Maria Magdalena et Triduo Christi Disceptationis Defensio (Henri Estienne, Paris, April 1519), fol.82 v, where Clichtove does allude to the Fifth Lateran Council; Stapulensis does not appear to do so.
- (39) Two striking references to Pope Leo X occur in the introduction and the conclusion of the Disceptatio Secunda, (cf: note (94) below) : "...Leonis primi sanctissimi pariter et doctissimi, cuius ideam Leo X hoc nostro tempore Pontifex Maximus praefert.... hanc secundam de Maria Magdalena finimus Disceptationem. Quam tibi Dionysi Praesul optime nuncupare volui, non ob id solum quod te in rebus et humanis et divinis agnoscam solertissimum quodcumque tibi cum spiritualibus hominibus eisdemque; non paucis multa sit consuetudo, a quibus facile intelligere posses num forte quippiam hac in re disceptando esset erratum; sed etiam, (quod omnium maximum est), quia non minus favoris et gratiae tibi comparasti apud Leonem X Pontificem Maximum, summumque Christi in terris vicarium, ac unicum in iis praesertim quae ad res sacras et spirituales pertinet  
 ἡμῶν ἀρχὴν τε καὶ αὐτοδύναμειαν. Cui uni si haec nostra disceptatoria indago non videbitur indigna, neque ab evangelica luce et pia veneratione sanctae et beatae Mariae sororis Marthae Christi hospitae aliena, non timebo quid faciat mihi homo...".  
 Apart from this there is one other generalised reference to the contemporary papacy in the works here under review: in his preface to the edition of the Proverbia of Ramon Lull, published on 25 December 1516, where he justified his undertaking the work by reciting the previous judgements which had cleared Lull of the imputation of heresy, Stapulensis referred to the "...inclitam illam Romam auctoritatem pontificiam..." as the "...caput fidei...".  
 Elsewhere in these works all he has to say about the papacy seems to be expressed only in historical terms referring to the original apostle Peter; see below chapters 3 & 4.



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- (40) See Renaudet:Préref. p.453.  
It has been suggested that his participation in the reforming movement at St. Germain-des-Prés was a kind of substitute for his abortive wish to enter a monastery himself; cf: note (17) above.  
See C.L. Salley, Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples, Heir of the Dutch Reformers of the Fifteenth Century, The Dawn of Modern Civilisation, Essays Presented in Honour of Albert Hyma, edited by Kenneth A. Strand (Michigan, 1962). Hereafter: Salley: Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples.
- (41) See Renaudet:Preref. p.588, and the series of Bulls of Leo X, in the Archives Nationales de France, L.330.
- (42) See Graf: Beitrag, p.20.
- (43) See note (16) above, and the appendix to chapter 2.
- (44) During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Faculty of Theology held its meetings sometimes in the Convent of the Mathurins; but more frequently in the College of the Sorbonne; consequently the faculty was often called "the Sorbonne". Sorbonne in this thesis means the Faculty of Theology in Paris, unless otherwise stated.
- (45) For a general account of this, see C. Thurot, De l'Organization de l'Enseignement dans l'Université de Paris au Moyen Age (Paris, 1850).  
For some account of changes and developments in the period under review, see A. Renaudet, L'Humanisme et l'Enseignement de l'Université de Paris au Temps de la Renaissance, in Aspects de l'Université de Paris, ed. V. Carrière (Paris, 1949).  
Also: A. Renaudet, Paris de 1494 a 1517 - Eglise et Université, Réformes Religieuses, Culture et Critique Humanistes, in Courants Religieux et Humanisme à la fin du XVme et audebut du XVIe Siècle; Colloque de Strasbourg 9-11 Mai, 1957 (Paris, 1959).
- (46) In his 1496 edition of Boethius' Arithmetica Stapulensis had quoted the inscription from Plato's Academy: "Nemo huc mathematice expers introeat"; he had read The Laws, and The Republic, and used some of those ideas in his 1506 Commentary on Aristotle's Politics; cf. also his Hecatonomia, (Paris, April 1506). See Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. p.204. One of the characteristic themes in his work, that of Christiformitas, to be discussed in the next chapter, clearly owes something to Plato's theory of forms, as outlined in Book 6 of The Republic, but was derived more immediately by Stapulensis from the neoplatonism of Nicolas of Cusa, and Pseudo-Dionisius.



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- (47) See Marcel Godet, La Congrégation de Montaigu, 1490-1580, Bib.de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes (Paris, 1912) p.59.
- (48) See Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms.1168, fol. 81-90. For further details of Beda's activity and career, see W.F. Bense, 'Noël Beda and the Humanist Reformation at Paris, 1504-1534', typescript Ph.D. Thesis (Harvard, 1967).
- (49) Johannes Reuchlin, also called Capnion, and more rarely Fumulus, born 1455, at Pforzheim in Baden; commenced studies in Paris, c.1473; M.A. Basle 1477; University of Tübingen 1481; after 1482 he pursued a diplomatic as well as an academic career, under the patronage of the count of Wurtemberg.  
 - See Ludwig Geiger, Johann Reuchlin: Sein Leben und Seine Werke (Leipzig, 1871).  
 The Kabbalah was a secret doctrine developed in thirteenth century European Jewry, in which philosophical speculations based on allegorical interpretation of the Hebrew alphabet led to symbolic exegesis of the text, and the coining of particular formulae supposedly endowed with special powers.  
 - See Christian D. Ginsburg, The Kabbalah, Its Doctrines, Development and Literature (London, repr. 1925); also J. Dagens, Hermetisme et Cabale en France de Lefèvre D'Etaples à Bossuet, in Revue de Littérature Comparée 35 (1961) p.5 and following.
- (50) Stapulensis gives five examples of rabbinic exegesis, contrasted with a Christian interpretation, in his preface to the Quincuplex Psalterium and quotes him by name elsewhere in the work, e.g. Psalm 71, Adverte, verse 17. See also Beatus Rhenanus, Schelestadt, 10 Nov. 1509, to Reuchlin: "...Vides igitur quanti te faciat Faber, quantaque honoris prefatione de te loquatur..." in A. Horawitz and K. Hartfelder, Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus (Leipzig, 1886) hereafter: Horawitz-Hartfelder, No. 11.
- (51) See letter quoted in note (50). It is open to question how proficient in Hebrew Stapulensis really was. He claimed to use a knowledge of Hebrew in such works as the Psalterium Conciliatum in his Quincuplex Psalterium, and was not apparently deterred by the discouragement of his friends in Strasbourg from attempting to use the original languages when he commenced a translation of the whole Bible into French in 1525; see: Gerard Roussel, Strasbourg, December 1525, to Nicolas le Sueur, Herminjard I, No. 168, p.415. When the French version of the Bible appeared in 1530 however, it had been made from St. Jerome's version; see below, chapter 6. A former pupil of Stapulensis, Michel Hummelberg, described him in 1509 as "...homine multiscio Hebreorum mysteria..." in a letter to Bruno Amerbach, and in 1512 as ".....



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virum profecto graece et hebraice doctum..." in a letter to Heinrich Bebel; see A. Horawitz, Michel Hummelberger, Eine Biographische (Berlin 1875). This view was contested by Mutianus Rufus in June 1514, when he said that Stapulensis did not know Hebrew, and merely followed St. Jerome's interpretations of Hebrew words, and criticised Stapulensis' translation of psalm 59 in the light of this remark; see C. Krause, Der Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus (Kassel, 1885) No. 373, p.444.

(52) Cf. note (49) above.

(53) See Renaudet:Préréf. pp. 647-9 for details.

(54) See Léopold Delisle, Notice sur un Régistre des Procès-Verbaux de la Faculté de Théologie de Paris, Pendant les Années, 1505-33, in Notes et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale, t.XXXVI (1899) hereafter: Delisle, p.351, quoting fo.4 v of the original ms. register.  
See also Herminjard I, p.15, note 1.

(55) See Stapulensis, Paris, 30 August 1514, to Reuchlin: "...Unum tamen amicos tuos solatur, hanc theologorum determinationem, cum solum sit scholastica, perparum rei tuae aut nichil obfuturam...Quapropter te rogamus bono esse animo, et ut fortiter velis causam tuam coram propriis iudiciis agi curare. Si vinces, nos tecum vincimus..." Herminjard I. No. 3, p.15.  
A letter addressed to Stapulensis on 11 July 1516, by Giles of Viterbo, a member of the commission appointed by the University of Paris to give judgement in the Reuchlin case, seems to imply that Stapulensis did write to the commission on Reuchlin's behalf, but the reference is ambiguous; see G. Bédouelle and F. Giacone, Une Lettre de Gilles de Viterbo, 1469-1532, à Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples, 1460-1536, au Sujet de l'Affaire Reuchlin in BHR (1974) 36, pp. 335-45.

(56) For Stapulensis' denial of St. Jerome's authorship of the Vulgate, see below, chapter 2, Appendix I. For the accusations being made against him, see George Civis, Tournay 12 Dec. 1514 to Josse Clichtove, in Bib.Maz.ms.1068, fol.229 r - 233v; also Michel Humelberg, Rome, 29 May 1515, to Beatus Rhenanus, in Horawitz-Hartfelder, No. 51.

(57) Cf. letter quoted in note (55) above. Guillaume Petit was Poenitentiarius to the King at this time, an office interpreted by Herminjard as either confessor to the King, or final confessor to those condemned to death who would accompany them on the way to execution; Herminjard I, p.16, note 4. Renaudet:Préréf. p.653, interprets it to mean inquisitor.



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- (58) Cf. note (56) above.
- (59) "Super contentiâ de eo (Stapulensis) in libello seu processu per fautores dicti Reuclin composito contra facultatem", 2 May 1515; Bib.Nat.ms. nouv. acq.Lat.1782, fol.42 v.
- (60) No documents survive to indicate the contrary.
- (61) See Herminjard I. p.17, n.7.
- (62) Laurentii Vallensis viri tam Graecae quam Latinae linguae Peritissimi in Latinam Novi Testamenti Interpretationem ex Collatione Graecorum Exemplarium Adnotationes Apprime Utiles, (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 13 April 1505).
- (63) See Erasmus, Antwerp May 1515, to Martin Dorp in P.S. Allen, Opus Epistolarum Desiderius Erasmus Roterodami, Denuo Recognitum et Auctum (Oxford, 1906-13). Hereafter: Allen: II, letter 337, p.112.
- (64) Stapulensis to Erasmus 23 October 1514; see Allen II, letter 315, p.38. Erasmus remarked that it was only now that he saw Stapulensis' edition of St. Paul, in the letter quoted above in note (63).
- (65) Novum Instrumentum Omne, Diligenter ab Erasmo Roterodamo Recognitum et Emendatum, non solum ab Graecam Veritatem, Verum Etiam ad Multorum Utriusque Linguae Codicum eorumque Veterum Simul et Emendatorum Fidem, Postremo ad Probatissimorum Citationem, Emendationem et Interpretationem, Praecipue Origenis, Chrysostomi, Cyrilli, Vulgarii, Hieronymi, Cypriani, Ambrosii, Hilarii, Augustini, Una cum Annotationibus, quae Lectorem Doceant quid qua ratione mutatum sit, (Basle, J. Froeben, February 1516).
- (66) Cf. Erasmus' Apologia commending the Novum Testamentum, second edition 1519: "...Post Laurentinum Vallam, cui non hoc tantum in parte debent bonae litterae, post Jacobum Fabrum, virtutis omnis et literarum antistitem..."  
E.g. Erasmus, Annotationes in Epistola ad Romanos cap.1: "...Tametsi dissentit eximius ille vir et amicus noster incomparabilis Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, quem ego quoties nomino honoris causa nomino, nempe cuius ardentissimum in restituendis bonis literis studium magnopere comprobo, eruditionem tam variam minimeque vulgarem admiror, raram quandam morum comitatem ac facilitatem adamo. Porro singularem vitae sanctimoniam veneror etiam et exosculor. Verum quis umquam fuit vel adeo doctus vel attentus, qui non hallucinatus sit ac dormitarit alicubi, praesertim in tot voluminibus, totque rerum difficultatibus versans?"



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- (67) See Thomas Grey, Paris, 5 August 1516, to Erasmus, passing on Stapulensis' friendly greetings, Allen II, No. 445, p.286; also Erasmus, Antwerp 15 Feb. 1517, to Guillaume Bude Allen II, No. 531, p.459; and Antwerp, 26 Feb. 1517, to Wolfgang Capito, Allen II, No. 541, p.487, still expressing friendly and admiring sentiments about Stapulensis. A further letter, Karl Offhuys, Paris 30 October (1516) to Erasmus, Allen III, No. 692, p.114, (if it has been correctly dated) specifically tells Erasmus that Stapulensis is not offended by Erasmus' criticisms and corrections of his translation of the text of the Pauline Epistles; see The Correspondence of Erasmus, trans. R.A.B. Mynors & D.F.S. Thomson, annotated by P.J. Bietenholz (Toronto, 1979) hereafter: Toronto Edn., vol.4, letter 480A.
- (68) In the Apologia Erasmi Roterodami ad Eximium Virum Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem, cuius argumentum versa pagella demonstrabit, (Louvain, T. Martens, August 1517), Erasmus accused Stapulensis of making twelve alterations, which he listed in detail, to his own text in the light of Erasmus' Novum Instrumentum, and further insinuated that Stapulensis had antedated his own publication to disguise this fact: "...Nunc adeo nihil horum tibi curae fuit, ut videri possis non ob aliud istam aeditionem accelerasse, nisi ut amicum incesseres...". In the 1517 edition of his Pauline Commentary Stapulensis inserted an extra section into the text as it had been printed in the first edition in 1512, entitling it, in the margin, Corollarium Notae, in which he quoted a series of Erasmus' statements as they appeared in the Annotationes on chapter 2 of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and refuted them point by point. With each statement the initials "E" and "F" appear in the margin, printed beside the respective statements of Erasmus and Faber Stapulensis.
- (69) Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. p.212, makes the comment that: "...The Dutch Christ was the bloody, subsequently crowned, Ecce Homo, the pitiful God of the Flemish workers and bourgeois, of Albert Dürer. Stapulensis' Christ was still the metaphysical God of Ficino, Mirandola and Nicolas of Cusa", which offers an interesting perspective from which to view the different approaches of the two men.
- (70) For Stapulensis' concept of the hypostatic union, see below, chapter 3. For his method of scriptural exegesis, see below, chapter 2.
- (71) Cf. John B. Payne, Erasmus & Lefèvre d'Etaples as Interpreters of Paul, in Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte LXV (1974) pp. 54-83.



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Stapulensis justified his differing from Aquinas' interpretation of the passage by the supposition that Aquinas assumed the Vulgate version to be a faithful representation of the original Hebrew text, and so adapted his understanding of that wording to an adequate Christology. Stapulensis pointed out that one who knew Hebrew was not afraid to differ from Aquinas on this point though he was a fellow Dominican, and went on to support his own reading by reference to the Psalterium Hebreum, Grecum, Arabicum et Chaldeum, cum tribus Latinis Interpretationibus et Glossis, edited by Augustino Giustiniani, printed in Genoa by P. Porrus, October 1516, in fact the first polyglot psalter printed. Triple psalters like Stapulensis' first part of his Quincuplex where different versions of the same language were printed in parallel columns were not uncommon; see Rice: Prefatory Epistles, p.200, note 28.

In the first edition of his Apologia ad Fabrum Erasmus dismissed this appeal to Giustiniani's work somewhat lightly, but spoke more seriously of it in a subsequent letter to Budé, see Allen III, No. 906, p.460, 22 Dec. 1518.

- (72) The Apologia makes very dull reading; extending to 47 folios in the octavo edition much of the text is repetitive; cf. note (66) above. A slightly revised second edition was printed by Froben in Basle in February 1518. Erasmus wrote to Stapulensis from Louvain on 11 September and 30 November 1517, and 17 April 1518; Allen III, No. 659, p.81, No. 724, p.152, and No. 814, p.285.
- (73) Stapulensis' remark in a letter to Beatus Rhenanus from Paris, 9 April 1519, may be relevant here:  
 "... Tam rarus nunc scribo epistolas, et tam dissuetus, ut in albo sim obscurorum virorum. Unum etiam est quod me continet ab scribendo, quia nolim ullo modo literas meas familiares, incultas et nullo apparatu ut scribere soleo, excudi; quod animadverti aliquando factum, quod et mihi displicuit..." Herminjard I., No. 20, p.44-5.
- (74) The first of these letters of complaint seems to be that addressed to Thomas More from Louvain, c.10 July 1517, which is typical of the rest; see Allen III, No. 597, p.3.
- (75) A number of Erasmus' friends replied by criticising his temper, his manners, and even his argumentation; see letters from Symphorien Champier, (?) Lyons, September 1517, and Guillaume Budé, Paris 12 April 1518, Allen VI, No. 680a, p.xxvii and Allen III, No. 810, p.268.



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- (76) This 1515 edition is the second edition of the full work; a quarto edition of the text of the Epistles without the commentary was printed in Cologne by Martin Werde in 1515.
- (77) Cf. note (68) above. See letter from Erasmus to Thomas More, c.10 July 1517; note (74) above; and Thomas More to Erasmus, 7 October 1517, Allen III, No. 683, p.103.
- (78) See Toronto Edition, vol.5, p. 11-12.
- (79) Little can be gleaned from a physical examination of the book; the gatherings throughout consist of four double sheets, except in the case of the last gathering but one, which consists of five double sheets, and includes the dated colophon. The final gathering, again consisting of four double sheets, contains a text which is a self-contained entity: Pseudo-Linus: De Passione Petri & Pauli; for details of this text see chapter 2 below.
- (80) See Pierre Barbier, Sensebardeau, 12 August 1517, and Johannes Caesarius, Cologne, 22 September 1517, Allen III, No. 621, p.43, and No. 680, p.101.
- (81) See Erasmus, Rochester 22 August 1516, to Henri Boville, Allen II, No. 456, p.324.
- (82) See Erasmus, Louvain, 17 October 1519, to John Fisher, Allen IV, No. 1030, p.93.
- (83) See Erasmus, Antwerp, 26 Feb.1517, to Wolfgang Capito, Allen II, No. 541, p.487; Louvain, 13 May 1521, to Alexander secretary to the Count of Nassau, Allen IV, No. 1192, p.453; Basle, 16 June 1526, to the King of France, Allen VI, No. 1722, p.360.  
See also Erasmus, Basle, 23 June 1526, to the Sorbonne: "...In Fabrum habebat [Beda] ex re justiore debacchandi caussam, et tamen in illum mitior est. Ad me quum ventum est, fit censor, et nihil crepat nisi blasphemias et haereses...", Allen VI, No. 1723, p.365.
- (84) See Erasmus, Basle, 16 May 1526, to Jacques Toussaint, Allen VI, No. 1713, p.345; Basle, 6 June 1526, to Willibald Pirckheimer, Allen VI, No. 1717, p.350; Basle, 24 March 1527, to Stapulensis; Allen VI, No. 1795, p.479.
- (85) See Duellum Epistolare Galliae et Italiae Antiquitates Summatim Complectens... Item Complures Illustrium Virorum Epistolae ad Dominum Symphorianum Camperium, (Venice, J.F. Giunta, 10 Oct. 1519) c iii r-v.  
See also Thomas Grey, Paris 5 August 1516, to Erasmus, Allen II, No. 445, p.286.

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- (86) See Beatus Rhenanus, Basle 3 September 1516, to Erasmus, Allen II, No. 460; and also Guillaume Budé, Paris, 27 October 1516, Herminjard I, No. 6, p.23, note 3.
- (87) Proverbia Raemundi, Philosophia Amoris Eiusdem, (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 13 December 1516). It is interesting, in view of the conflict between Reuchlin and the Sorbonne, in which Stapulensis had had some part, that his introduction to this work includes some very laudatory remarks about the Sorbonne: "...Ceterum bibliothecae nostrae libris eiuscemodi doctrinae sunt adornatae, praesertim illa insignis domus Sorbonicae, quae nobilissimum est in toto terrarum orbe tam nominatissimorum theologorum quam publicorum theologicorum certaminum domicilium...". "Sorbonne" here could of course be referred only to the college of that name, and not to the theological faculty as a whole, despite the final phrases quoted.
- (88) Euclidis Geometricorum Elementorum Libri XV (Paris, Henri Estienne, January 1516/7).
- (89) See Rice:Prefatory Epistles, No. 120; also Mathurin Alamande, Castres, 5 Sept.1519, to Gilles Galerite; quoted by A. Claudin, Un Ecrivain Saintongeais Inconnu - Mathurin Alamande, Poète et Littérateur, de Saint-Jean d'Angély in Bulletin de la Soc. des Archives Historiques de la Saintonge et de l'Aunis, XV (1895) pp. 189-203. See also Henri Glareanus, Paris, 29 August 1517, to Zwingli; Schuler et Schultess, Zwinglii Opera, VII, p.26.
- (90) See Stapulensis, Paris, August, 1518, to Jean Langrenus, Duellum h i r.
- (91) Cf. n.(17) above. Similar complaints recur later see his letter, Meaux, 6 July 1524, to Farel, Herminjard I, No. 103, p.219.
- (92) For Stapulensis' own summary and criticism of the legend connected with the shrine near Marseilles, see his De Maria Magdalena & Triduo Christi Disceptatio, ad Clarissimum Virum Dominum Franciscum Molineum, Christianissimū Francorum Regis Francisci Primi Magistrum (Paris, Henri Estienne, a. 4 April 1517/8) fol. 23 r. - 24 v.
- (93) See Marie Holban: François de Moulin de Rochefort et la Querelle de la Madeleine in: Humanisme et Renaissance II, (1935) pp.26-43 and 147-171. Stapulensis did write a short life, Vie de Sainte Madeleine, which attracted little attention in the circumstances. See Bib.Nat. ms.Fr.24955. Moulin de Rochefort himself produced a small pamphlet, Petit Livret faite à l'Honneur de Madame



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Sainte Anne et de la Reine sa Fille Mere du Jesus Christ, during the course of the controversy; Bib. Arsenal, ms.4009. see Holban: op.cit. Its main interest for the present study is the fact that it defended Stapulensis' orthodoxy, virtue and patience.

- (94) For a detailed study of this question, see V. Carrière, Libre Examen et Tradition chez les Exégètes de la Préréforme, 1517-21 in Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise de France, XXX, (1944) pp. 39-53.  
And also Anselm Hufstader, Lefèvre d'Etaples and the Magdalen in Studies in the Renaissance, vol. XVI, (1969), pp. 31-60.  
The first edition of the Disceptatio is dated April 1517 o.s. Easter that year was 4 April, after which any printing would presumably have been dated 1518. A reprint of the same work appeared by the middle of July 1518, see Rice:Pref.Epistles p.399, for a discussion of the exact date.
- (95) Hufstader has pointed out that a tract Dissertatio sive α √ α 0 T K E V n Historica et Philologica de Maria Magdalena, included in the 1610 Frankfurt edition of the works of Pirckheimer, would seem to date from some time between 1510 and 1517.
- (96) Marc de Grandval, Apologiae seu Defensorii Ecclesiae Catholicae non Tres sive Duas Magdalenas sed Unicam Celebrantis et Colentis, Tutamen et Ancora (Paris, Badius Ascensius, September 1518), John Fisher, De Unica Magdalena, Libri Tres (Paris, Badius Ascensius, February 1519).  
- Eversio Munitionis quam Jodocus Clichtoveus Erigere Moliebatur adversus Unicam Magdalenam (Louvain, T. Martens, 1519).  
- Confutatio Secundae Disceptationis per Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem Habitae in qua Tribus Foeminis Partiri Molitur Quae Totius Ecclesiae Consuetudo Unicae Tribuit Magdalenae, (Paris, Badius Ascensius, September 1519).  
Rice: Prefatory Epistles, p.400, has noted tracts by:- Agrippa of Nettesheim, Symphorien Champier, Balthasar Sorio, and Giovanni Maria Tolosani della Colle, in addition to those already mentioned.  
Somewhat curious in this context is the attitude of Clichtove: in July 1518 he had written his own commendatory preface to the reprint of Stapulensis' first Disceptatio; in April 1519 he produced his own Disceptationis De Maria Magdalena et Triduo Christi Defensio, printed by Henri Estienne, which was in effect an expansion of Stapulensis' own work, and included a further section of the legend about the three marriages of St. Anne. By the end of 1519, or soon afterwards however, he had been converted,

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(or frightened), into "testifying to the Sorbonne that he had abandoned his views on the three Magdalens", and reputedly asserted that Stapulensis had done the same; see Hufstader:op.cit. It is implied by Herminjard I, p.180, note 4, that it was the eruption of trouble connected with Luther that caused his change of stance; see C.E. Bulaeus, Historia Universitatis Parisiensis (Paris, 1665-73) hereafter: Bulaeus, vol. VI, p.116.

- (97) See Hufstader's analysis of Stapulensis' attitude, distinguishing between the significance of the words disceptatio and quaestio; the former is taken to mean a dialectical dispute terminating in a juridical decision, in this case concerning what are the historical facts. It is suggested that Stapulensis deliberately avoided the scholastic term quaestio which would have implied a speculative discussion of doctrine, since his main argument was that the matter was one of historical fact and not doctrine. See also Stapulensis, Paris, 20 May 1519, to Cornelius Agrippa: "...de quibus discepto solum, et nichil temere deffinio..."; Herminjard I. No. 23, p.48.
- (98) De Maria Magdalena, Triduo Christi, et Una ex Tribus Marias Disceptatio, ad Clarissimum Virum D. Franciscum Molineum, Christianissimi Francorum Regis Francisci Primi Magistrum tertia emissio (Paris, Henri Estienne, 1519) and De Tribus et Unica Magdalena Disceptatio Secunda; ad Reverendum in Christo Patrem D.Dion.Bricconnetum, Episcopum Madoviensem quid Sanctissimum Leonem Pontificem Maximum Christianissimi Francorum Regis Francisci I Oratorem (Paris, Henri Estienne, 1519).
- (99) Noel Beda, Scholastica Declaratio Sententiae et Ritus Ecclesiae de Unica Magdalena; per Natalem Beda, per Additionis Modum ad ea Quae Prius per Alios Contra Eosdem Fuere Deprompta, Contra Magistrorum Jacobi Fabri et Judoci Clichtovei Contheologi Scripta (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 25 November 1519).
- (100) See C. Duplessis D'Argentré. Collectio Judiciorum de Novis Erroribus qui ab Initio XII Saeculi usque ad Annum 1713 in Ecclesia Proscripti Sunt et Notati (Paris, 1725-36) hereafter: D'Argentré II, vi-vii, for the text of the Sorbonne decision condemning the three-Magdalen thesis, 1 December 1521; it was drawn up by Clichtove. Publication of the decree was inhibited by King Francis I. For further discussion of this point see R.M. Cameron, The Charges of Lutheranism brought against Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples in The Harvard Theological Review, 63 (1970) pp. 119-149.



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- (101) E.g. "...Quare si qua in templis canuntur ficta, falsa, ridicula, nihil veriti inficiabimur sanctam ecclesiam illa instituisse, sanxisse, approbasse, sed potius aliquem nimia simplicitate deceptum; aut forte quendam rabulam qui organum patris mendacii fuerit, non Christi, qui est via, veritas et vita. Quid enarrem mythologias...cum fidei nostrae non sit credere has metamorphoses et hanc pecorum et iumentorum anastasin, sed ut veritas habet, hominum? Quae nihilominus in sacris canuntur aedibus. At numquid haec et innumera id genus absurda, approbavit ecclesia? Absit ecclesiam fidei matrem et doctricem veritatis faciamus magistram erroris..."; Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, III, 62.
- Also: "...Nam in prima cum Ambrosio hanc ingressus Symmachian: duas esse Magdalenas evangelicas disputavi. Hic autem, non duas sed unica esse disseram. Ut intelligant ne hic quidem me quicquam temere determinare velle, sed disceptare dumtaxat; et sic quidem disceptare, ut non ex alio fonte quam ex evangelico rationes nostrae deriventur. Atque id dialecticarum more efficaciam propositionibus aliquot positis, quas sola evangeliorum luce, adiuvante ratiocinandi lege, notificare conabor...ne me copia dicendi.. aut denique disertae potentia linguae quispiam putet quicquam a candido lectore extorquere velle ..."; Disceptatio Secunda, Prologue, fol.3 v-4 r. For further discussion of Stapulensis' hermeneutical principles and method of exegesis, see below: ch.2.
- (102) E.g: "...'Ecclesia ubi est, ibi est veritas', sic Irenaeus.... Iis stare velim quae sunt sanctae matris ecclesiae, nec latum quidem unguem ab eis discedere..."; Disceptatio Secunda, Conclusion.
- Also "...Qui vult ergo audire Christum, audiat eum in ecclesia, in qua Christus et apostolici solum sunt viri; et studeat ex parabolam spiritu, id est evangelio doctrinaque Christi, vitalem haurire sapientiam..."; Comm. in Matt.1.
- Also "...Nam ut vehemens spiritus et procella frequenter navem quolibet, non quo nautae volunt, impellit; ita fortis ratio et evangelii auctoritas, cui omnis alia cedit, me ad hoc adegit, ut non ubique cum eis sentire potuerim, quod alioqui fecissem perlibenter. Hoc tamen non nesciebam evangelium evangelique veritatem, conspiracy, concordiam, sibi praeponi nemini iure molestum fore, etiam si sanctus sublimi choro spectandus fuerit. Praeterea neminem esse, modo sane fuerit iudicio, benevolaque mente qui eum in aliquo contravenire putet ecclesiae qui evangelium sequatur..."; Disceptatio, De Triduo Christi, Conclusion.

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- (103) E.g. "...Addes, ecclesia canit; fateor, et pleraque alia quae nec asserit nec recipit;.... Praeterea ritum ecclesiae, quod ais, eos dicturos, non tollimus; sed monemus praevia rationis luce, abusum submovendum. Neque ritum vocamus, quod rite non fit, sed ei quod rite fit, contrarium est...Nec ordinationem ecclesiae impugnamus, nam cum ecclesia sancta sit, sine macula et sine ruga, sanctam habet veramque institutionem; et quae instituit vere sanctaque instituit...Neque dicimus ecclesiam tanto tempore errasse, aut id Deum permississe. Ecclesia enim, sancta Catholica et apostolica quam credere debemus, non errat, sed quidam particulares in ea..."; Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, Preface and III, 60-63.
- (104) Cf. Comm. in Lk.VI., where Stapulensis referred to his Disceptatio, but followed this with the comment: "...Utrumque sit, ipsa dilexit, Christi testimonio, multum. Et nos ergo, illius exemplo, illum quem dilexit, multum diligamus, et nos mutuo propter ipsum...".
- (105) E.g. "...Praeterea nonne Deus omnibus temporibus iis hominibus qui mente valerent, quique in ocio versarentur literario, verum et falsum in medium proposuit discutienda; voluitque victoriam semper apud partes veri remanere? Certe in iis maxime quod ad rem ecclesiae suae facerent id ipsum voluisse putandum est. Cum ipse sit (ut ipsa nos sancta mater nostra instruit ac docet ecclesia) veritatis amator et auctor. Et quomodo aliqui essent filii ecclesiae iuxta Sancti Petri apostoli admonitionem semper ad satisfactionem parati unicuique poscenti rationem, nisi vera et rationabilia essent quae ecclesiae sectatur..."; Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, III, 55.  
It is interesting to note however that the 1530 edn. of the Bible in French seems to relinquish somewhat this stand on the Magdalen question; see below: ch.6.
- (106) See his letters to Cornelius Agrippa at the time of the Magdalen controversy: "...Quapropter oro te, nulli ob eam rem feceris tuam benevolentiam ifensam. Falsitas in seipsa marcescet, et nullo impugnatore, tandem per seipsam cadet..." Paris, 20 May 1519. Also "...Maluisssem negotium de Anna sine contentione inter doctos versari. Quod si non potest propter malignitatem temporis et perversa hominum ingenia, et tibi insidet animo contendere, vide ne hoc ulto pacto honoris mei zelo feceris, sed solum veritatis tutandae, et devotionis deiparam Mariam et eius matrem beatissimam Annam..." Paris 20 June 1519. Herminjard, I, Nos. 48 & 52, pp. 84 & 101.



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See also the final paragraphs of the Exhortatio Finale appended to the second edition of the French Psalter, Antwerp, June 1525, where Stapulensis recommended his readers to refrain from answering contentious arguments about the meaning of scripture, and to content themselves with thanking God in their own hearts for the gift of his word, unless there was reasonable hope of resolving the argument by restrained and properly informed discussion.

- (107) Cf. G. Ebeling, Luthers Auslegung des 14 Psalms in Z.Th.K. 50 (1953) pp. 280-339.
- (108) Cf. J.S. Preus, From Shadow to Promise (Cambridge, Mass. 1969) pp. 153-175.  
also Erich Vogelsang, Der Junge Luther in Luthers Werke in Auswahl, V, ed. Otto Clemen, (Berlin 1955)  
also W. Schwarz, Luther's Attitude Towards Humanism in J.Th.S. 6 (1955) pp. 72-76.
- (109) See Luther, Wittenberg, 19 October 1516, to Spalatin: "...Nam et Stapulensi, viro alioqui, bone Deus, quam spirituali et sincerissimo, haec intelligentia deest in interpretando divinas literas..."  
and: Wittenberg, 1 March 1517, to John Lang: "...Erasmus nostrum lego...sed timeo ne Christum et gratiam Dei non satis promoveat, in qua multo est quam Stapulensis ignorantior..." Herminjard I, No.8 (two entries), p.26.  
It seems that by 1523 Luther erased passages borrowed from Stapulensis from his own second edition of his Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians; see Imbart III, p. 143, where references to the Weimar edition of Luther's works are given in this connection.
- (110) Stapulensis, Paris, 9 April 1519, to Beatus Rhenanus: "...Saluta, obsecro, meo nomine...et caeteros omnes quos in Christi dilectione diligo, etiam Lutherum, si aliquando tibi occurret..."  
and: Paris, 20 April 1524, to Guillaume Farel: "...De literis et libris quos ad me dudum misisti... Confutationem Determinationis M.N. Paris...". The work referred to seems to have been Confutatio Determinationis Doctorum Parhissiensium contra M.L.....Adjecta est Disputatio Groningae habita, cum duabus Epistolis... The final letter mentioned is from Luther, written from the Wartburg Castle, on 17 January 1522, to Capito. Herminjard I, Nos. 20 p.42 and 98 and note 8, p.207.

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- (111) This is asserted by Renaudet: Hum. & Ren., p.213, but on what evidence is not clear, beyond discernible similarities of thought. The statement in the same article that Stapulensis was in "close personal contact" with Luther and Zwingli also seems to be an exaggeration of the actual circumstances; p.202.
- (112) See below note (133).
- (113) Cf. Stapulensis, Meaux, 16 July 1524, to Guillaume Farel: "...Quam consolationem spiritus ex literis tuis, Oecolampadii, Pelycani, Hugaldi, et ex Germanicis libris concepi, dicere haudquaquam possim, quia plane redolent Christianismum...Mirum quam moverunt Reverendum Dominum meum literae Oecolampadii, cui totus mundus debet, ut qui juxta nomen suum vere luceat in domo, non privata sed tota Dei ecclesia, omnes juvans, nunc peculiaribus opusculis, nunc trallationibus (sic) novis concionando ad populum, nunc in diatriba scholastica profitendo; et quamquam bona sunt opera quae ex graeco latinitati donat, mirifice tamen amplectimur si quas insuper adjicit adnotationes, quandoquidem magis authoribus ipsis sapere Christum videntur. Deus illum, nobis et ecclesiae suae lucentem, diu conservet! Diligentissime igitur quoscunque libros ab eo emanasse cognoscimus, colligimus; certe non nisi optima in illis contineri. Et id etiam studiose facit Reverendus Dominus meus...". Herminjard I, No. 103, p. 219.
- (114) A note of the commencement of this work occurs in a letter from Henri Glareanus, Paris, 13 January 1519, to Zwingli, asking for accounts of Swiss martyrs, for Stapulensis' benefit. See Herminjard I, No. 19, p. 141. The unfinished work Agones Martyrum of Stapulensis is in the Bibliothèque de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français in Paris. Nothing on that copy explains why it was discontinued.
- (115) Guillaume Farel, Epistre à Tous Seigneurs et Peuples: De Vray Usage de la Croix de Jésus Christ (Neuchâtel, 1548) "...Les légendes...deja deux mois de martyrs etaient imprimes...Mais ayant entendu la grosse ydolatrie qui estoit es prieres des saintz, et que ces légendes y servoient comme le soulfre a allumer le feu, il laissa tout, et se mit de tout apres la sainte Escriture..." ed. Geneva 1865, p.172.
- (116) Contemplationes Idiotae; De Amore Divino, De Virgine Maria, De Vera Patientia, De Continuo Conflictu Carnis et Animae, De Innocentia Perdita, De Morte (Paris, Henri Estienne, August 1519). Michel Briçonnet, Bishop of Nîmes 1514-54, was a first cousin of Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet of Meaux.
- (117) E.g. "...Stilus humilis est, sed purus sincerusque et plane Christianismum sapiens...".



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- (118) Stapulensis' movements at this time cannot all be dated accurately. See Graf:Essai, pp. 93-94. Some letters in 1519 were still dated from Paris; see Herminjard, I., Nos. 20 & 30, pp. 42 & 59. The preface of the Contemplationes Idiotae, (see above: note (116)) refers to his visiting various monasteries at about this time, i.e. summer of 1519. It seems possible that he left Paris for Meaux partly because of the harassment he suffered from the Sorbonne. Erasmus, in a letter of October 1519, (see note (82) above), remarked: "Miseret me Fabri, viri nimirum optimi, qui Lutetiae non mediocri gravatur invidia, praesertim Dominicanorum, potissimum ob hoc quod dictus sit favere Capnioni...". Glareanus, in a letter dated Paris, 4 July 1521, to Zwingli, implied that Stapulensis sought to avoid the conflict aroused in Paris about Luther: "...Faber Stapulensis ab urbe longe abest ad XX lapidem, neque ullam ob causam quam quod convitia in Lutherum: audire non potest, tametsi Quercinus, (Guillaume Duchène) ille theologus neque a Fabro, neque ab Erasmo, etiam temperet...". Herminjard I, No. 38, p. 69. Briçonnet made him director of the Lepers Hospital on 11 August 1521, and his Vicar General in Spirituals on 1 May 1523; see Bretonneau, p. 178-9.
- (119) Guillaume Briçonnet was an envoy for King Francis I in the negotiations concerning the Concordat of 1516, with Pope Leo X, which suppressed and replaced the Pragmatic Sanction; see above, note (31). His activity throughout this period would argue a serious interest in church reform. Cf. Graf:Essai, p. 14. Cf. Lucien Febvre, Au Coeur Religieux du Seizième Siècle (Paris, 1957), pp. 156-7, for discussion of this point.
- (120) For many details of Briçonnet's reforming activity, see Samuel Berger Le Procès de Guillaume Briçonnet au Parlement de Paris, en 1525, in Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, XLIV (1895), pp. 7-22, hereafter Berger. Berger quotes, and makes extensive use of the Registers containing the Acts of this process, preserved in the Archives Nationales in Paris, Sections X la: Conseil 1528-9; Plaidoiries-Matinées 4877-8; Après-dînées 8342. For the commencement of Briçonnet's first visitation, see Berger, p. 11.
- (121) See A.E. Tyler, Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples & Henri Estienne the Elder, 1503-20, in The French Mind, Studies in Honour of Gustave Rudler, ed. W. Moore, R. Sutherland & E. Starkie (Oxford 1952), pp. 17-33.
- (122) See Toussaint du Plessis, Histoire de l'Eglise de Meaux (Paris, 1731), hereafter: du Plessis, vol. I, p. 326; also Bretonneau, p. 164-169.



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It seems possible that it was this prohibition of the exhibition of images of the stigmata of St. Francis that gave rise to a rumour that one of the charges Briçonnet was called to answer in 1525 was that of iconoclasm: "...Evesque de Meaulx en Brie, près Paris, cum Jacobo Fabro Stapulensi, depuis trois moys en visitant l'evesche ont bruslé actu (sic) tous les imaiges, reserve le crucifix, et sont personnellement ajournés a Paris, a ce moys de Mars venant, pour respondre coram suprema curia et universitate erucarum Parhissiensium, quare id factum est...". Pierre de Sebbville, Grenoble, 28 December, 1524, to Anemond de Coct, see Herminjard I, No. 132, p. 313. It is apparently true that Briçonnet had removed an ancient statue of the goddess Isis, which used to stand against the wall in the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, and was, mistakenly, venerated with votive lights along with other images of saints in the vicinity. See Bretonneau, p. 206.

- (123) From various sources the following names can be traced as having formed part of this evangelical group at Meaux, at some time between 1518 and 1525: Guillaume Farel, Martial Mazurier, Pierre Caroli, Gerard Roussel, Nicolas Mangin, Michel d'Arande, Jean Dumesnil, Matthieu Saulnier, Jacques Pauvant, François Vatable, Jean Lecomte de la Croix; see Stapulensis, letter quoted in note (128) below, Graf:Essai, Delisle, Berger. See also N. Weiss, La Réforme du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, Son Caractère Ses Origines, et Ses Premières Manifestations in Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire du Protêtantisme Français, LXVI (1917), pp. 224-5. Of these members of the Meaux circle, Farel, Roussel, d'Arande and Vatable at least had been with Stapulensis at St. Germain-des-Prés; see Graf: Beitrag, p.20.
- (124) See Procès-Briçonnet, Bib.U.Paris, No. 795, fol.77, quoted by Imbart III, p.162, note 2.
- (125) See Briçonnet, Meaux 16 January, 1523, to Marguerite: "...Envóiez la au Fabre qui se tient en vostre dict hermitage; J'espere qu'il et ses deux compaignons satisferont a vostre desire..."; C. Martineau & M. Veissière, Corrèspodance de Guillaume Briçonnet et Marguerite d'Angoulême, 1521-4 (Geneva, 1975), No. 49, p.14. The remark would seem to imply that Stapulensis was actually visiting Marguerite at the time; if so we have no other record of it.
- (126) Commentarii Initiatorii in Quatuor Evangelia (Meaux, Simon de Colines, June 1522), cf. Stapulensis, Meaux, 29 November 1521, to Antonio Ardithon (sic: Ardillon), preface addressed to Petrus de Lilla, in Bollavensis de Borbonia, Apologia Heremiterum, C.1521: "...Et jam ferme Matheus perductus est ad calcem".



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Le Nouveau Testament: Les Quatre Evangiles (Paris, Simon de Colines, 8 June 1523).

Le Nouveau Testament: Les Epistres. Les Actes et L'Apocalypse (Paris, Simon de Colines, 6 November 1523).

According to the prefatory letter to the second part of the New Testament, it had been printed at the expense of Queen Louise and Marguerite of Angoulême.

- (127) Procès de Briçonnet, fol.166, quoted by Berger.
- (128) See Stapulensis, Meaux, 6 July 1524, to Farel: "... Commisit Girardus..provinciam interpretandi populo promiscui sexus, quotidie una hora mane, epistolas Pauli lingua vernacula aeditas, non concionando, sed per modum lectura interpretando..." Herminjard I, No. 103, p. 219.
- (129) Le Psaultier de David (Paris, Simon de Colines, 16 February 1523/4). The second edition was printed by Martin Keyser in Antwerp, on 20 June 1525, presumably because of the restrictions which the Sorbonne was attempting to enforce at the time, but the third edition was again printed by Simon de Colines in Paris, on 17 February 1525/6. Psalterium David, Argumentis fronti cuiuslibet Psalmi adjectis, Hebraica et Chaldaica multis in locis translatione illustratum (Paris, Simon de Colines, 1524), Commentarii in Epistolas Catholicas (Basle, Andreas Cratander & Johannes Behelius, July 1527).
- (130) Cf: Stapulensis, Meaux, 6 July 1524, to Farel Herminjard I, No. 103, p. 219: "...Nunc in tota diocesi nostra, festis diebus, et maxime die dominica, legitur populo et epistola et evangelium lingua vernacula; et si paroecus aliquid exhortationis habet, ad epistolam aut evangelium aut ad untrumque adjicit...". This sentence exactly describes the printed work known as Epistres et Evangiles pour les Cinquante et Deux Sepmaines de l'An (Paris, Simon Dubois, c.1525). For a discussion of the date and authorship of this work, see below, chapter 4.
- (131) See Erasmus, Louvain, 13 May 1521, to Girolamo Aleander, secretary to the Count of Nassau, Allen IV, No. 1192, p. 453; and Claude Dieudonné, Annecy, 10 September 1521, to Agrippa, Herminjard I, No. 39, p. 72. See also Bulaeus, VI, p. 116, ff.
- (132) See Delisle, p. 324, 325, & ff.
- (133) See Berger, pp. 9-14.
- (134) Bretonneau records two such cancellations; the first on 13 December 1523 (p. 174) seems to have been on doctrinal grounds, the second on 12 April 1523/4, (p. 194-5), on moral grounds. See Berger, p. 19, for a discussion of this.

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- (135) Farel was in Basle by the time John Lang wrote to him from Paris on 1 January 1524, Herminjard I, No. 83, p. 178.
- (136) See Francis M. Higman, Censorship and the Sorbonne: A Bibliographical Study of Books in French Censured by the Faculty of Theology in the University of Paris, 1520-1551 (Geneva, 1979) hereafter: Higman, p. 23.
- (137) See L. Lalanne: Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris sous le Règne de François Ier, 1515-1536 (Paris, 1854) hereafter: Lalanne, p. 101.
- (138) See Delisle, p. 328 & 360; also Higman, p. 23.
- (139) See Higman, p. 77-8.
- (140) See Delisle, p. 328-331 & 360-5; also Higman, p. 23.
- (141) See Delisle, p. 326, 332, 358-60, 367; also Bulaeus VI, p. 183; also Lalanne, p. 101-4.
- (142) For the initiative of Queen Louise of Savoy, see Delisle, p. 332 text and note 4.  
For the organisation of the Sorbonne, and the tenure of office as syndic by Noel Beda, see Delisle, p. 318 and 321-2.
- (143) *Determinatio Facultatis super aliquibus propositionibus certis e locis nuper ad eam delatis de veneratione sanctorum, de canone Missae, deque sustentatione ministrorum altaris, et caeteris quibusdam*; see D'Argentré, II, xiv-xx, also Delisle, p. 372.
- (144) See Delisle, p. 333 & 371-2.
- (145) See Herminjard I, No. 103, p. 219.
- (146) See previous note; also Gerard Roussel, Meaux 6 July 1524, to Farel, Herminjard I, No. 104, p. 231; also Jean Canaye, Paris 13 July 1524, Herminjard I, No. 105, p. 240.
- (147) See above, note (145); also Stapulensis, Meaux 13 January 1524, to Farel, Herminjard I, No. 85, p. 183; also Stapulensis, Meaux 20 April 1524, to Farel, Herminjard I, No. 98, p. 206. For Stapulensis' mild disapproval, see Herminjard I, No. 103, p. 223 with note 4.
- (148) For the Monitum concerning the possession of Lutheran books, 15 October 1523, and the reaffirmation of orthodox doctrines, March-April 1524, see Bretonneau, p. 170-173.  
It is remarkable that neither the accusations of heterodoxy, nor the defensive responses made during this period, found cause to mention the papacy.



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- (149) See Du Plessis I, p. 329; also Berger, p. 19.
- (150) See Du Plessis I, p. 329-30.
- (151) See Bulaeus VI, p. 173-84.
- (152) Berger, p. 21, takes this view: "...Il est certain que la prédication de Luther et ses écrits sont à l'origine du mouvement religieux de Meaux...". The present thesis would suggest that this statement is clearly wrong.  
Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. p. 214, also makes some extreme statements, which seem to go well beyond the evidence: "...On n'invoquait plus les saints ni la Vierge...Les Epistres et Evangiles des cinquantedeux dimanches...était bien le manifeste d'une liberté qui, fondée sur la Bible seule, refusait de se plier à la tradition romaine...".
- (153) See Bulaeus VI, p. 176: "...Extra evangelium Ecclesia non potuit adstringere Christianos...".
- (154) See Berger, p. 7.
- (155) See Higman, p. 77-8, for a discussion of the date of Parlement's enrolment of the decree.
- (156) See Du Plessis II, p. 281.
- (157) See Berger, p. 16; also Higman, p. 80.
- (158) For Caroli's abjuration on 3 July 1525, see Delisle, p. 319; it did not however save him from further harrassment; for the censure of the Sorbonne dated 7 September 1525, see D'Argentré II, p. 8-9; also Bulaeus VI, p. 173-184.  
Pauvant and Saulnier, likewise censured on 9 Dec. 1525, made abjurations somewhere about that time; see D'Argentré II, p. 9 and 30.
- (159) For the Sorbonne censure of 6 November 1525, see Bulaeus VI, p. 9 and 30-40; also Higman, p. 80.
- (160) See Wolfgang Capito, Strasbourg 27 October 1525, to Oecolampadius, Herminjard I, No. 167, note 5.
- (161) See Du Plessis II, p. 281. Stapulensis was known as Antonius Peregrinus; see previous note. He was also known as Coracinus, see Herminjard I, p. 408, note 1.
- (162) See Du Plessis II, p. 282. For comment on a similar intervention by the King while in captivity, in another case, see Higman, p. 79.
- (163) See Berger, p. 16.
- (164) See Higman, p. 26.

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- (165) See Herminjard I, p. 408, note 13. Also Capito, Strasbourg, 20 November 1525, to Zwingli, Herminjard I, p. 411, note 8; also Marguerite d'Angoulême, Paris, 9 March 1526, to Hohenloe, Herminjard I, No. 171, p. 419.
- (166) See previous note.
- (167) E.g. the Chézal-Benoist General Chapter of 1525 comprehensively condemned the works of Luther, Erasmus, Stapulensis, Oecolampadius and Melancthon, ruling that such books must be kept under lock and key by the superior, who had to report the fact to the General Chapter if he gave anyone permission to read these works, or to study Greek or Hebrew; see Bib.Nat.ms.Lat.13852, fol. 36 r. Stapulensis' commentaries on the Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, the Catholic Epistles, the Psalms, and his work on the Magdalen question, were all put on the Index drawn up after the Council of Trent; the wording makes clear that this condemnation was a repetition of that of the Sorbonne: "...tamdiu prohibita sint quamdiu ab alicuius Universitatis Catholicae facultate theologica..."; see Index Librorum Prohibitorum, Primum ex Judicio Patrum in Concilio Tridentino Delectorum, deinde Vero Auctoritate Pontificis Maximi Comprobatus, second edition (Dillingen 1565), fol. 28 v.
- (168) See Herminjard I, No. 167 and 168, pp. 404 and 408; notice also the suggestion that the activities of the exiles could embarrass or compromise Bishop Briçonnet. Roussel's account of the Eucharist in Strasbourg might be compared with that of Bucer in 1524, in R. Stupperich, Deutsche Schriften I, (Guntersloh, 1960), pp. 185-278.
- (169) It is interesting to note that, in his letter to Farel, from Meaux on 6 July 1524, Stapulensis acknowledged the receipt of two of Luther's liturgical works without making any comment on them, though the rest of the letter included several comments on other reformist works he had received with pleasure. Herminjard I, No. 103. Capito reported that Stapulensis approved of Oecolampadius' book on the Eucharist; see Herminjard I, No. 167, p. 406 note 5.
- (170) See Herminjard I, Nos. 163 and 184, pp. 393 and 457.
- (171) See below: chapters 4 and 5.
- (172) See Gerard Roussel Strasbourg, December 1525, to Nicolas Le Sueur: "...Deinde hic occupamur aliquot, ut integra Biblia, non ex vulgata editione, sed consultis Hebraeis, Graecis et iis qui in Germanicam linguam tralata sunt, in vestram transfundantur linguam; quod opus, ut magni laboris,



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ita puto magnae futurum aedificationi. Coracinus suo more pergit, volens id praestare in Veteri quod in Novo, nec a nobis terreri potuit, ob rei difficultatem et linguarum imperitiam, ut desisteret, et curarent quae suae essent harenae ..."; Herminjard I, No. 168, p. 408.

- (173) Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis, Theologi Celeberrimi, Commentarii in Epistolas Catholicas, Jacobi I, Petri II, Johannis III, Judae I, Nunc Primum ab Autore emissi et aediti Basle, Andreas Cratander & Johannes Behelius, July 1527). The title-page of the edition reads: August 1525, and Stapulensis' prefatory letter addressed to Antoine Du Prat concludes: "Meldis, tamquam pro encaeniis circa anni virginei partus initia, MDXXV". For further details, see below, chapter 4. For his other linguistic work at the time, see below, note (180).
- (174) See Oecolampadius, Basle 9 March 1526, to Farel, Herminjard I, No. 170, p. 417; also Capito, Basle, 17 March 1526, to Zwingli, Herminjard I, No. 170, p. 418-9, note 5; also Erasmus, Basle 16 May 1526, to Jacques Toussaints; see above note (84).
- (175) See Erasmus, Basle 16 June 1526, to King Francis I; see above note (83). See also Delisle, p. 335-7. It seems that Erasmus also wrote to Rome on Stapulensis' behalf, though his letter has not survived; see Gian Matteo Giberti, Rome, 27 November 1525: "...Ego vero hic tam ero tuus tuorumque quam fui semper, agamque sedulo quoad potero ut Jacobus Fabri, si admonitus ab eius procuratoribus fuero, intelligat suam quidem virtutem maxime, tuam vero commendationem non minus sibi profuisse..."; Allen VI, No. 1650a, p. 234-5.
- (176) See Higman, p. 27.
- (177) See Graf:Essai, p. 122. See also Bucer, Strasbourg, 13 July 1529, to the Dauphin, François de Valois, Herminjard II, No. 260, p. 194.
- (178) For the subsequent history of the diocese of Meaux, see Du Plessis, II. For some comment on Briçonnet's later attitude, see Berger, p. 18-22, and Brétonneau, p. 179-224.
- (179) See below chapter 2, appendix I.

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- (180) Liber Psalmorum cum Tenoribus ad Recte Proferendum Aptissimis (Paris Simon de Colines, 1528).  
Grammatographia Ad Prompte Citoque Discendam Grammaticen, Tabulas tum Generales tum Speciales Continens (Paris, Simon de Colines, October 1529).  
Vocabularium Psalterii pro Ingenue Indolis Adolescente D. Angolismensi, et Sorore eius D. Magdalena modestissima Adolescentula, Liberis Regiis, ac deique pro Cunctis Rudibus, Primum in Grammaticis Initiandis (Paris, Simon de Colines, 1529).  
 The Commentary on the Catholic Epistles was the last of Stapulensis' works to be signed by him, but these three text-books are confidently attributed to him; see Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p. 119, and also note (177) above.
- (181) See below, chapter 6.
- (182) See above, note (129).  
 See also Higman, p. 23.  
 The third edition of the French Psalter, printed by Colines in Paris in February 1526, still included Stapulensis' exhortatory letter on how the psalms should be prayed, and the need for folk to have them available in the vernacular, despite the theoretical restrictions on vernacular translations of the Scriptures.
- (183) "...Haec partim Jacobum docuit haereticus Luther, et praesertim in eo quo dicit poenitentiae nomen esse desiderabile, poenitentiamque non esse carnis afflictionem aut macerationem, sed resipicentiam... Istos homines qui solis humanitatis ac linguarum praesidiivi instructi, sacra omnia edissere sunt agressi...". Annotationum Natalis Bedae Doctoris Theologi Parisiensis in Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem Libri Duo et in Desiderium Erasmus Roterodamum Liber Unus qui Ordine Tertius est (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 1526) fol. CXVII v<sup>o</sup>.  
 Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p. 172, note (39) makes a curious mistake in connection with the first point, suggesting that the influence was the other way round: "Beda pense que ce passage a eu une 'mauvaise influence sur Luther'" supporting this by a quotation from Beda's work which reads "...Haec partim Jacobus (sic) docuit hereticus Luther (sic) et praesertim...". The edition of Beda's work in the British Library, London, which I have quoted above, is undated, presumed to be that of 1526; since Bédouelle refers to folio 151 recto for his quotation purporting to come from the 1526 edition, it would seem that there must have been a further edition, or at least a further printing. I have been unable to check whether the misprint which occurs in Bédouelle's quotation does appear in other copies of Beda's work than the one in London.



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- (184) See Delisle, p. 336-7, and 387.
- (185) See previous note; also Bulaeus VI, p. 200-201; also Higman, p. 29-30.
- (186) Apologia Natalis Bedae Theologi adversus Clandestinos Lutheranos (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 1529).
- (187) See note (48) above: also Bulaeus VI, p. 238; also Higman, p. 29-31.
- (188) Pauvant was executed on 28 August 1526, and Berquin on 17 April 1529, despite the personal interventions on their behalf by the King in the preceding years.
- (189) See Imbart III, p. 256-60; also: Higman, p. 17-8.
- (190) See Marguerite of Navarre, [Fontainebleau] /May 1530/, to Grand-Maitre Anne de Montmorency, using the excuse of Stapulensis' health to seek permission for him to retire to Nerac, Herminjard II, No.291, p. 250.  
The precise date when Stapulensis moved to Nerac is unclear; Rice:Prefatory Epistles, p. 512, suggests the autumn of 1531.
- (191) See Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland, 1533-1559 ed. Gerhard Mueller, Erganzungsbande, 2 vols. (Tubingen 1963 and 1969) I, p.464-8, and p. 534, II, p. 16-17.
- (192) See below, chapter 6.
- (193) See Theodore Beza, Vie de Jean Calvin (Paris 1869) p. 21. The occasion of the visit would seem to have been after the rectorial address preached by Cop on 1 November 1533, and before the affair of the Placards on 18 October 1534. See Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p. 133.
- (194) See Herminjard III, No. 544, p. 400, n.6 and 7. Farel reported that Stapulensis had said to Roussel: "...Nos damnati sumus, veritatem celavimus quam profiteri, et testari palam debebamus..."; autograph note by Farel on the outside of a letter from Michel D'Arande, St.-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, March 1536, to himself. The authenticity of this note is questioned by Herminjard; Farel did not include reminiscence of it in his Epistres a Tous Seigneurs, when he spoke of Stapulensis' continued "papalism"; see above note (115).  
See also Hubert Thomas, Annales Palatini Libris XVI Continentes Vitam et Res Gestas, etc. Frederici Comitum Palatini Rheni (Frankfort 1624) who recorded

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a somewhat similar reminiscence reputedly received from Marguerite of Navarre in 1538: "...Comment pourrais-je subsister devant le tribunal de Dieu moi qui, ayant enseigné en toute pureté l'Evangile de son Fils à tant de personnes, qui ont souffert la mort pour cela, l'ai cependant toujours évitée dans un âge mûr ou, bien loin de craindre, je la devrai plutôt désirer?...". See Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p. 134, n.59, where the reliability of these reminiscences is discussed; it is pointed out that very similar anecdotes are recorded concerning the deaths of Roussel and Bishop Guillaume Bricconnet, and suggested that they are standard examples of a hagiographical literary genre, rather than records of "ipsissima verba".

- (195) See J. Pannier, De la Préréforme à la Réforme: A Propos Des Deux Dernières Publications de Lefèvre D'Etaples, 1534 in Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses, XV (1935) pp. 530-1.
- (196) See Martin Bucer, Strasbourg, 13 January 1534, to Ambrose Blarer, Herminjard III, No. 445, p. 129; also Guillaume du Bellay to Martin Bucer, referred to in letter Oswald Myconius, Basle, May 1534, to Joachim Vadian Herminjard III, No. 469, p. 183. The Sorbonne repeatedly rejected the suggestion that a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew was necessary for the understanding of the Bible; Parlement constantly upheld the right of "mere grammarians" at the Collège des Lecteurs Royaux, founded at the King's instigation in 1530, to use biblical texts for their studies, despite the protests from the Sorbonne. In December 1534 Parlement threatened to impose a new syllabus of study on the Sorbonne, and the threat was put into effect in 1536 when a syllabus of theological studies was decreed which included four daily lectures on Scripture; see Bulaeus, VI, p. 239-44, and 247.
- (197) See above note (2); also Bretonneau, p. 205.



## Chapter 2.

### Characteristics of Stapulensis' Scholarship.

Three aspects of Stapulensis' scholarship can be distinguished which correspond to the categories of his published works mentioned in the previous chapter: the humanistic, the spiritual and mystical, and the scriptural. A "humanist" might be defined as one whose scholarship is characterised by reliance on human reason, by the study and use of pagan, classical philosophy, by the demand for accurate, critical texts, and the composition of elegant Latin.<sup>(1)</sup> Stapulensis' devotion to the works of Aristotle and the whole articulated system of thought therein represented, and his refusal to be content with the edited, abridged or mutilated versions current in the late mediaeval schools, would seem to establish his position as a humanist scholar. That he remained a humanist, a "professor of letters" by choice all his life seems apparent from his continued teaching of philosophy which he wished to renew; several remarks in his works express his contempt for the decadent scholasticism he encountered in philosophy and theology, and his lack of a doctorate in theology may indicate his deliberate rejection of the scholastic pattern of study which still obtained in the Paris theological faculty of his day.<sup>(2)</sup>

For Stapulensis however "humanist" did not mean "pagan". The humanist approach was to be harmonised with a spiritual and mystical approach to scholarship; the term "mystical" is here used to indicate his ideal of a close personal relationship with God, transcending the results of merely human study and achieved more by love than by knowledge.<sup>(3)</sup> This seems to have been the aim towards which all his work was ultimately directed. He believed in the necessity of restoring solid learning as a basis for true piety, sharing with Erasmus the view that the restoration of true spiritual values depended on access to authentic texts of the scriptures, the Fathers of the Church and the classics, and so he saw his editorial activity as a real work of piety.

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Despite his humanist concern for the accurate study of authentic texts, scholarship for its own sake was never Stapulensis' main preoccupation, and this was especially true in the field of scripture. He saw his vocation as that of a populariser and disseminator of religiously fruitful knowledge of the scriptures, and so maintained that his works were only introductory and not technically "theological". That is to say, he did not intend to propound any new theological position, but merely to act as an elementary exegete, providing such explanatory matter as would enable the devout reader to meet Christ for himself in the scriptures.

### THE HUMANIST

The significance of Stapulensis' work as a humanist is two-fold: it has been plausibly suggested that only in France (and not for instance in Germany or England), were political forces sufficiently evenly balanced for a long enough period to provide the opportunity for a humanist reform movement to achieve some maturity. Until the affair of the Placards in 1534 King Francis I felt able to protect such people as Stapulensis, since their movement was not indisputably heterodox nor socially disruptive, despite the antagonism it aroused in such quarters as the Sorbonne. Nor was the King, before 1534, so beholden to forces outside France, of either a "Catholic" or a "Protestant" complexion, as to feel compelled to make a decisive demonstration in favour of either position.<sup>(4)</sup> France thus provided an arena in which a thoroughgoing reform movement stimulated by humanist studies might have achieved some success without necessitating a complete break with the Roman Church. Stapulensis was one of the key figures in the limited progress which was made by such a movement, and his work offered a vision of what "might have been" had it not been overtaken by more violent events.

Secondly, Stapulensis' Aristotelian work shaped both the attitude and the methods he carried over into his scriptural studies; for this reason a limited discussion



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of it is included here, but no attempt will be made to assess his position purely as a humanist or as a philosopher. Though it was in 1505, in his preface to a mystical work, the Primum Volumen Contemplationis Raemundi that he described his concept of his vocation (5) he had originally acquired manuscripts of the works of Ramon Lull in 1491, the year before his first philosophical publication, the Paraphrases of Aristotle's Physics.<sup>(6)</sup> He describes Aristotle as: "...one of God's priests and prophets... to enlighten our times ...".<sup>(7)</sup> who "...through divine favour leads us out of the prison of ignorance". He pointed out that the Physics "...leads us from sensible objects which are the images of eternal things to the threshold of the intelligible world..."; from them could be drawn "useful, beautiful and holy things...".<sup>(8)</sup> He seems to have developed significantly a trend perhaps initiated from another humanist, Hermolao Barbaro, whom he met in Rome in 1492, of giving Aristotle such a christian interpretation as to endow his works with a hidden mystical meaning, a secreta analogia.<sup>(9)</sup> It was this conviction of the universal relevance and the essentially religious significance of Aristotle that secured the unity of Stapulensis' scholarly work, and provided real continuity between his "philosophical" and his "scriptural" phases.<sup>(10)</sup>

If Stapulensis' aim was essentially religious his methods were essentially humanistic. His edition of Aristotle's Ethics published in 1497 has been described as the "breviary of humanism",<sup>(11)</sup> and this work was followed in 1501 by an edition of the Logical Works the introduction to which set out the method Stapulensis intended to use. A paraphrase of the work is to be provided, and general commentary is to be supplemented by the addition of further short notes where this seems appropriate. The comment is also made that dialectic (by which Stapulensis understands the presentation of a logical series of propositions adequately supported from recognised sources), or any other art or discipline, is

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useful when it is restrained within its own proper sphere; if not it becomes like a storm at sea driving a ship quite arbitrarily without any control being exercised by the sailors.<sup>(12)</sup> The implication seems to be that Stapulensis will not use an argumentative or syllogistic method in developing the meaning of any text on which he comments. Later in the same work he remarks that the Topici, or selection of common arguments provided by Aristotle, can lead either to dialectic which ensures the soundness of a chain of argumentation, or to sophistry where specious appearances delude by captiousness rather than convince by argumentation.<sup>(13)</sup> His unflattering estimate of the decadence of dialectic is expressed in pithy terms; comparison with Laocoon is one of his milder descriptions.

Stapulensis' rejection of scholastic methods did not mean that he happily embraced the ideas and influence of all pagan classics; he remained essentially a Christian humanist and had strong words of condemnation for some of the more immodest works of the pagan poets.<sup>(14)</sup> In 1497 when he edited the Ethics of Aristotle, he admitted some works of orators and poets as commentaries on the text, but by 1506 he would admit them only as sources of grammar and style, not of wisdom. This hardening of his attitude may have been partly a reaction to the publication of Erasmus' Enchiridion, and even more so to his edition of Lucian's Dialogues which Stapulensis disliked.<sup>(15)</sup> The religious tone of his scholarship was however heightened chiefly by the more positive factor of his developing interest in mystical writings, which will be discussed below.

During Stapulensis' Aristotelian period it has been suggested that the chief influences on him were those of Nicolas of Cusa and Lorenzo Valla; however, as his own interest in the works of Pseudo-Dionisius increased he became somewhat disenchanted with Valla who denied the authenticity of the Dionisian corpus.<sup>(16)</sup> Other influences to which his Italian travels had laid him open were those of Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino,



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who both seem to have contributed to his method of commenting on the scriptures.<sup>(17)</sup> It would be difficult to specify the source of his conviction of the need for exact and critical texts; probably his own experience in teaching Aristotle was sufficient to convince him of this primary item in the humanist programme, which remained his chief instrument of reform throughout his life. It was this which led him to criticise and correct the Vulgate text of the scriptures, to dare to criticise St. Jerome,<sup>(18)</sup> to join in the Reuchlin affair, and to dispute with Erasmus.

The clearest exposition of Stapulensis' aim and method of study as a humanist came in his 1506 edition of Aristotle's Politics. In commenting on chapter 6 of Book 8, he outlined what he considered to be the ideal programme for the formation of a mature Christian spirit and conscience: he retained the basic structure of the Trivium and Quadrivium, though not too much time was to be spent on the elements of grammar. The student should soon move on to the study of rhetoric in the works of Virgil and Prudentius, and among the moderns Battista Spagnuoli was admitted, but the light sensual poets should not be used. Examples of elegant style should be taken from Cicero and Pliny the Younger. Only a brief knowledge of history was necessary, but Josephus and Hegisippus should be studied in order to gain acquaintance with the destiny of the Jews and the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire.<sup>(19)</sup> The dialectic course must be based on the actual text of Aristotle itself, studied with the help of ancient or modern hellenistic commentaries, but not the mediaeval "sophists". The Quadrivium of Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy was included as an exercise in the study of abstract sciences; Stapulensis himself edited a number of mathematical treatises, and seems to have retained an interest in the subject throughout his life, since echoes of it recur in various of his scriptural works. The seven liberal arts should be followed by a study of the nature of man using Aristotle's Physics, Politics and

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Ethics, and the (spurious) Economics. After this the student was ready to commence Theology where Aristotle was again his initiator with the Metaphysics - a guide to all that unaided reason could know about the invisible world. The study of sacred scripture only came after this. It was to be studied "more deeply than had been customary", and with the help not of mediaeval "sophists" but of the commentaries of the Fathers of the Church, especially SS. Jerome and Augustine. He alluded also to "those other Fathers" who knew how to harmonise the culture of antiquity with mysticism, like St. Gregory Nazianzen and St. Athanasius, or those who "from St. John Damascene onwards have assessed the depths of the problems posed by the dogmas of the faith".<sup>(20)</sup>

For Stapulensis the next stage was contemplation, and perhaps the mystical knowledge of God which comes in ecstasy. The instruments for this were an ascetic life and the study of the writings of the mystics, among whom his favourite was the Pseudo-Dionisius whom he believed to have been the real disciple of St. Paul, and whose writings he therefore revered as sub-apostolic.

Although in his programme mysticism comes as a result of scripture study, in his own life the order seems to have been reversed. He had begun to develop an interest in various mystical writings as early as 1491 with the acquisition of a manuscript of the works of Ramon Lull, and thereafter collected similar works with zeal and enthusiasm. It seems to have been as a result of reading such works that he finally turned his attention wholly to scripture after 1508, but this was not for him a denial of his lifelong patronage of Aristotle. By that time his general elementary work of providing adequate texts for philosophy students had been achieved, but he still saw it as fitting to re-edit the Metaphysics in 1515. The introduction to this edition again emphasised his exalted concept of philosophy: the highest stage of philosophy is a divine science concerned with being itself, and it is according to this analogy that all else is described. From it are all things, through it are all things, in it are all



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things; to be aware of this is to have the key to all wisdom. Metaphusica can be translated as "supernatural" and therefore holds out the promise of divine things to us. In this work therefore divine things are held out to us under the cover of natural ones, just as fire is hidden in flint.<sup>(21)</sup> He who knows how to strike the spark from it will see a far greater light than that which can be struck from flint; God will raise him from the obscurity of mere vestiges to the superior and incomprehensible light of truth. So the text of the Metaphysics of Aristotle is like the top of a building pointing still higher to the heavens. The sub-title of the work makes the same point when it invokes "God the most high who is honoured in this work under the name of being itself....".

It has been suggested that Stapulensis gradually became aware that Aristotle could not actually provide the key to which he refers in the introduction quoted above, and so was prompted to seek it elsewhere, in the writings of the mystics, and in the study of scripture.<sup>(22)</sup> In that case an even sharper point would be given to his humanist rejection of "sophistical" commentaries, and his demand for accurate versions of the authentic texts when he was seeking in scripture what even his revered Aristotle could not provide; the most immediate contact possible with the actual words of scripture would have been of paramount importance to him. Moreover his study of scripture did not alter his view that human sciences form the appropriate prelude to the divine; the same point is made in his commentary on the First Epistle to Timothy where he prosaically pointed out that patient perseverance is the only way to acquire any science, and one should not wish to move on to the next stage too quickly. He went so far as to remark that because folk in his day were not devoting such thorough and patient attention to the learning in which they were engaged they were "more barren than the Libyan desert".<sup>(23)</sup>

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### THE MYSTIC

In Stapulensis' humanist programme of formation explicitly aimed at ascent towards union with God, there may have come a point at which he found himself forced to choose between pagan philosophy and Christian piety.<sup>(24)</sup> Though he did not see this as a choice between mutually exclusive alternatives, his centre of interest shifted in favour of the latter. He did not however turn immediately to the text of Scripture alone, but rather to the writings of certain acknowledged mystics, and to the Fathers of the Church. Genuine mystics were, he believed, directly inspired by God in their writings,<sup>(25)</sup> and the works of the early Church, especially the supposedly sub-apostolic writings, were so much nearer the original fount of divine light than the scholastic theology on which the universities of his day nourished their pupils, that they must surely put the reader into more immediate contact with God.<sup>(26)</sup> Stapulensis himself located this significant shift of interest in the year 1491 when he first received a copy of the Liber Contemplationis in Deum by the thirteenth-century Catalan, Ramon Lull. He said that he was so affected by this book that he longed to foresake the world and seek solitude, and debated entering a monastery, like a number of friends to whom he lent the book. Dissuaded from this, he perhaps adopted the idea of editing and publishing books as a kind of substitute vocation.

By the time that Stapulensis became a Master of Arts in 1487 the University of Paris seems to have been influenced by a sterile Terminism, the result of a long decline in scholastic philosophy which had occurred during the two preceding centuries.<sup>(27)</sup> The philosophy and theology which he therefore encountered at the beginning of his career, and which he criticised so frequently and bluntly, was probably that sterile Nominalism which "stimulated no creative spiritual life and failed to speak to the heart, ...for the Thomist and Scotist reaction of the second half of the fifteenth century had brought no new life to the dried-up faith".<sup>(28)</sup> These were precisely the reasons why he criticised scholasticism: "Those who



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pour out the study of such philosophical affectations are ignorant of God... God grant that they may all wake up, turn back, repent and sin no more; may He wash away this and all such sordid sophistry which does not edify, but destroys and prevents edification..."<sup>(29)</sup> Such a barren philosophical atmosphere generated its own reaction; there had developed in late fourteenth century Paris an interest in mystical theology which found expression in the writings and teachings of men like Pierre D'Ailly (d.1420), and Jean Gerson (d.1429) and which eventually provided an opening for some attempts at reform of the Church and of scholastic, moral and religious life.<sup>(30)</sup> A leading figure in this sphere was a man Stapulensis mentioned as one of his advisers about his own vocation, Jean Standonck. Standonck had been educated in the school run by the Brethren of the Common Life at Gouda, and so exposed to some extent to the Windesheim tradition which he helped to promote in fifteenth century Paris.<sup>(31)</sup>

A noticeable parallel can be drawn between Stapulensis' work and some of the salient characteristics to be found in the programme of the Brethren of the Common Life. This included the editing of a corrected text of the Bible for the use of the Brethren themselves, followed by work on texts of the chief patristic commentaries.<sup>(32)</sup> Another parallel with Stapulensis' later work can be found in the activity of two other fourteenth century Rhineland mystics, Gerard Groote and Florentius Radewijns, who proposed a programme of daily scripture reading in the vernacular as a means of purifying the heart which they believed to be depraved but not wholly corrupt; here the word of God was considered to be the Christian's supreme guide to worship and imitation of Christ.<sup>(33)</sup> This situation would seem to suggest that the reforming influences present in the Paris scene at the turn of the fifteenth century would have contributed to stimulating Stapulensis' developing interest in mystical theology. His humanist masters too, may have helped to provoke this interest. On his travels in Italy in 1492 and 1500 he was impressed with the work of Pico della Mirandola who, it

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seems, taught him to see Christ as truth itself, and therefore the key to all interpretation of Scripture. Such a Christological approach would probably be attractive to one with mystical inclinations, and Stapulensis may also have found the neo-Platonic tendencies of the circle of Marsilio Ficino in Florence congenial.<sup>(34)</sup>

Certainly the most positive influence in turning his thoughts in a mystical direction was, by his own admission, the work of Ramon Lull, together with those of the Pseudo-Dionisius which he first edited in 1499, and Nicolas of Cusa, from 1501 onwards. In view of the effect it had on him it seems strange that Stapulensis did not publish the work of Ramon Lull which he acquired in 1491 before 1505, nor was it the first work of this author that he did publish. In 1499 he produced an edition of four short works, in the introduction to which he explained how useful these were for the practice of a holy life.<sup>(35)</sup>

This preface appears to have been written a few months after that to the Dionisian corpus also published in 1499, so that Lull's books were not actually the first mystical works that he edited, though they seem to have been the first to exert an influence on his outlook. An edition of two further works by Lull appeared in 1516.<sup>(36)</sup>

Though Stapulensis did not publish his edition of the works of Nicolas of Cusa until 1514, it seems that this writer had been exerting an influence on his mind since 1501, and that he had been collecting manuscripts for the published edition from at least 1507.<sup>(37)</sup> Stapulensis' interest in mystical theology was therefore present throughout his active career as a strand permanently associated with his humanistic approach to study, and the range of the works he published in this field, from the Dionisian corpus in 1499 to the Contemplationes Idiotae in 1519, bears out this impression.

A full study of Stapulensis' mystical theory is not intended here since it would demand a separate thesis; the works collected, for convenience, into this category, will be considered only in so far as they contribute to an understanding of his ecclesiology, which is to be



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studied primarily in his scriptural works. Stapulensis' conviction that the mystic was directly inspired by God, as he stated explicitly in his defence of the "rude style" of Ramon Lull in the 1499 preface, underlay his veneration for all the mystical works he edited, and he seems to have had a fairly literalist conception of inspiration, in connection with both scripture and the mystical life. For him the mystic was the object of divine influence in the same way as the Gospel writers were; to read the works of the mystics was to come into the same sort of contact with God as when one read the Gospels. (38)

Such a concept of mystical inspiration harmonised with his high regard for traditional contemplative life, and the works produced by some contemplative monasteries. Aware though he was of the decline in fervour and observance in many monasteries, he does not seem to have questioned the validity and relevance of monastic life as an institution in the Church, and in his scriptural works defended it on more than one occasion. (39) His literalist notion of inspiration would also seem to be evident in his conviction of the superior authority of the writings of the early church on account of their greater proximity to the original source of revelation in Christ. This led him to edit a number of supposedly apostolic and sub-apostolic works, and encouraged him to abandon the scholastic commentators on scripture for an earlier, patristic approach. (40)

The combination of these ideas led him to see the reading of mystical works, such as those of John Ruysbroeck, as a fitting preparation for the reading of St. Paul's Epistles, but he also saw in the mystics a source of material for personal character training and formation. The preface to his first edition of Lull's works pointed out that two principles are necessary for guiding our lives: a knowledge of universals which gives rise to discipline, and a controlled mode of action, and went on to maintain that while both are necessary, the latter excels the former, since universals must be brought together into one and directed towards the one end of our salvation. Hence,

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the aim of the mystic who abandons diversity and plurality for the one thing necessary is profitable and edifying for all. This same gathering together of diversity into oneness, as the means of salvation and the fruit of a contemplative life, is again advocated in his preface to Ruysbroeck's work.<sup>(41)</sup> Following Pseudo-Dionisius he saw it as the aim of the contemplative or the mystic in pursuit of the one thing necessary to penetrate beyond the threshold to which Aristotle could take him, into the realm where the face of God is revealed to those who know how to seek it with passive, silent faculties.<sup>(42)</sup> However he saw a continuity between the natural impetus of the mind to ascend to God and the perception of eternal verities achieved only by divine inspiration, and credited the human faculties with a clearly defined role in this mystical ascent.<sup>(43)</sup>

The notion of an ascent to God, in defined stages, is perhaps the most significant concept Stapulensis derived from his reading of the mystics. The three-fold pattern of purgation, illumination and perfection, which seems to originate in the neoplatonism of Pseudo-Dionisius, recurs constantly in many parts of his work.<sup>(44)</sup> In expounding his theory of knowledge in his 1510 commentary on the De Trinitate of Richard of St. Victor, he combined it with the platonic notion of a chain of being to expand his portrayal of how man comes into contact with God. The pattern, too, of the Pseudo-Dionisian works, De Celestia Hierarchia and De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia seems to be reflected in his scheme of an ascending cognitive hierarchy parallel with the chain of being: as the latter includes matter, plants, animals, men, angels and God, so the former includes existence, life, sensible knowledge, rational knowledge and intellection. It becomes apparent that, like Nicolas of Cusa, he identified intellection with faith; while reason yields a human knowledge of divine things, intellection yields an illuminated knowledge of them. Just as man is the mean between animal and angel, so reason is the mean between the sense and imagination of beasts and the angelic faculty of intellect, and this median position is reflected in man's



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complex mental operation. Here we are concerned not with a detailed analysis of this epistemology but with the interconnections between the various stages noted by Stapulensis. Of man's three ways of knowledge the middle one, ratiocination, by extracting universals from sense experience, does provide him with vestiges of the prima veritas, which is however only truly apprehended by intellection since the archetypes in the mind of God are this prima veritas while all other truths are reflected vestiges of it. Imagination will supplement the action of the senses, reason that of imagination and faith that of reason. While reason can to some extent combat error by its own natural light, in intellection the greater light of divine illumination floods the lesser. The Word of God is that prima veritas, that divine light illuminating the intellect, so enabling it to pass beyond the images of reason into that area where the blind see, and those who think they see are blind, where ignorance is more highly prized than knowledge. (45)

Stapulensis perhaps had a yearning to synthesise all aspects of his life and thought, to harmonise and bring into a single pattern the various aspects of his study, work and prayer, again a neoplatonist characteristic. (46) Perhaps this partly explains why he pursued a reforming policy without ultimately seceding from the Church of Rome, and why indeed, he so much disliked and deplored schism. His own experience, and his articulated theory of a movement inward and upward in the development of a life in communion with God, perhaps enabled him to appreciate the role of outward forms and structures which commend themselves to the senses in that hierarchy of knowledge the topmost stage of which is some sort of mystical and ecstatic contemplation. Moreover he seems to have found no need to kick away the ladder by which he had climbed up; he found no need to reject Aristotle, whose Metaphysics he re-edited in 1515 after publishing the works of Pseudo-Dionisius, Lull, Richard of St. Victor, Ruysbroeck and Nicolas of Cusa; so too, it seems, he found no need to reject the outward sacramental forms and hierarchical structure of the Roman Church after he had pierced through much that was distorted,

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abused or corrupt, to the inner spiritual reality of which it was the vehicle.

Paradoxically it may have been one aspect of this mystical theory which led him to sympathise with some aspects of the movement for reform characterised by an anxiety to promote a more central use of the scriptures in the general life of the Church. He became convinced (perhaps by Nicolas of Cusa and others), of a disjunction as well as a conjunction between the knowledge attainable by reason and that derived from faith. Reason is inadequate to the knowledge of divine things and must be supplemented by intellection; the intellect does not know invisible and eternal things naturally; at this stage faith is the principle of all further knowledge. The prima veritas in the divine mind is the archetype which faith reflects, and faith thus becomes the prima mentis nostrae veritas. Reason retains a cooperative though diminished role in attaining to truth, is associated with faith in the process of intellectual cognition, and plays a part in opening the mind to divine illumination. Unaided human effort is therefore entirely futile; any doctrine of "works", or of scholastic theology which starts from man's end of the process, cannot by itself attain to God. However a process which starts with revealed knowledge accepted in faith, can usefully employ man's other faculties in the business of his salvation. The source and starting point of such revealed knowledge is of course the Bible, the first approach to which must be made in an attitude of simple humility; the docta ignorantia of those who thus approach will yield far more real knowledge and profit than the presumption of the discursive theologian. (47)

The connection between Stapulensis' attitude towards the scriptures and his repeated insistence that salvation is due not to our efforts but to God's loving mercy is not difficult to see. More surprising perhaps but quite consistent with the psychology outlined above, is his insistence on the real freedom of the human will. In one of his scholia on the works of Pseudo-Dionisius he



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attributed an unacceptable predestinationism to some fifteenth century Nominalists whom he called "idiots" (a word he was later to use rather differently), and pointed out that God has given man the great gift of free will. True, there is a book of life; but man's actions on earth either of sin or of repentance, can change what is written in it. The point is developed at some length, yet harmonised with the truth previously mentioned; those who fall and whose names are erased will be found therein again if they try to rise once more; "...and we can rise though not of ourselves. It is God who raises us. He it is who encourages those who have fallen, is the strength of those who remain firm, and the virtue of those who try to rise again...". Such an assertion of the freedom of the will, quite in harmony with the degree of autonomy Stapulensis accorded to reason in his hierarchy of ways of knowing, is to be found in one way or another in most of his favourite mystical writers.<sup>(48)</sup> His view would seem to be a synthesis of the statement of Aristotle: "Man is the principle of his own actions",<sup>(49)</sup> with the teaching of the New Testament echoed in the works of Pseudo-Dionisius, Nicolas of Cusa and Ruysbroeck. It is not therefore surprising to find in his scriptural works a constant effort to harmonise the supposedly antithetical doctrines of "faith" and "works", an effort which is significant in examining his concept of the church as both a spiritual and a visible reality.

The Platonism of which Stapulensis was apparently accused,<sup>(50)</sup> and which would seem to be discernible in the psychology outlined in the De Trinitate commentary, is also apparent in another interesting characteristic of his work. He culled from Nicolas of Cusa, and extensively developed the notion of Christiformitas, as a way of expressing the ideal of the Christian life, the summit to which all else was directed and the supreme expression of salvation. It is not easy to define precisely what the concept meant for him, but some elements of this can be indicated. The idea certainly included a good deal more than merely the volitional imitation of Christ though this practice would

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contribute to the achieving of Christiformitas. It was probably more akin to what St. Paul meant when he spoke of "putting on Christ";<sup>(51)</sup> but when the idea is expressed in a verbal form as a process rather than a state it is Christ, or God, who is the primary actor. There is room for growth and development in this process of becoming Christiform and man's own actions do contribute to this progress; it is possible to argue also that the life and actions of the institutional Church play a considerable part in the process; there seems to be a connection between Stapulensis' concept of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ and his concept of the members of the Church becoming Christiform. Several uses of other terms constructed with the particle "-formitas" presumably have some bearing on the general meaning conveyed by this word, and the implications of this seem to be essentially platonist.<sup>(52)</sup> It seems possible therefore to infer a little more about his concept of the Church from this aspect of his work.

For Stapulensis the essence of salvation for man is to conform to the archetype of being and holiness which is God. The primal form of this for man is Christ, the incarnate one; Christ is precisely the "scope" or "measure" to which he must be proportioned, and the process is achieved by the archetypal form exerting influence on the inferior exemplar. This concept of salvation is saved from being merely pagan platonism by the doctrine of the incarnation; in reality the Form is the true Son of God, in whom divine and human natures are hypostatically united. Thus the form exerts influence on the types by incorporating them into his Mystical Body which is the Church. The actual process is more real and effective than the pagan philosopher could ever have dreamed. A similar line of thought seems to be applied to the Church itself: Pseudo-Dionisius had given Stapulensis his precedent for regarding the ecclesiastical hierarchy as the exemplar of the celestial archetype, and a platonic connection between them would reinforce the requirement of membership of the former for inclusion in the latter. Though



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Stapulensis had a remarkably sanguine view about universal salvation for all the inculpably ignorant and unevangelised (except the Tartars, whom he seems to have held to be beyond the possibility of salvation),<sup>(53)</sup> he did not undervalue explicit membership of the visible Church as essential for salvation, for the visible Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. Granted his concept of the apostolic origins of the hierarchy (derived largely from Pseudo-Dionisius,) for him the visible Church had to be the Roman Church of his day. Some scholars have asked whether Stapulensis should be considered a Catholic or a Protestant;<sup>(54)</sup> the question is inappropriate in his particular circumstances, but it would seem possible to say that he was not a Protestant precisely because of his mystical leanings; he found it possible to transcend rather than reject the distorted or corrupt aspects of the external Church, without losing his perception of the validity and function of the structures which underlay them.

### THE SCRIPTURE SCHOLAR

About the year 1516 it was said of Stapulensis that, being wholly Christian, he took no pleasure in being described as either a Platonist or a peripatetic, and in comment on St. John's Gospel in 1522 he made the same point,<sup>(55)</sup> but his transfer of attention to scripture study did not involve the rejection of everything, (perhaps of anything) that he had learned from Aristotle. Notably, the method of commentating that he had perfected in his various editions of the Philosopher's works was largely carried over into his work on scripture. The reason for his change of interest is given in the prefatory letter to his first scriptural work, the Quincuplex Psalterium. He told Cardinal Briçonnet, to whom the work was dedicated, that only scripture promises the highest beatitude, as well as pleasure and profit, to the reader, and that the human studies to which he had so far devoted himself now seemed to him like darkness compared with light.<sup>(56)</sup> Further, he was moved with compassion for some of the inmates of monasteries he visited, who seemed to experience no sweetness in using the sacred writings,

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especially the psalms, to nourish their spiritual lives, largely because they found in them nothing more than some literal sense. "Consequently piety declined, devotion died off, religion has become extinct in such monasteries ...".<sup>(57)</sup> It was this experience which led him to seek in the prophetic and apostolic writings a different sense, the one intended by the Holy Spirit, and which Stapulensis still called the literal sense but which coincided with the spiritual sense. The key to this interpretation was Stapulensis' principle of referring all scripture to Christ as its subject. In the light of this his transfer of interest to scriptural studies could be seen as the natural development of his former mystical interests.

Attitudes already apparent in his work on mystical writers reappear in his commentaries on scripture and in his choice of other texts for publication. His wish that the reader should make as immediate a contact as possible with the word of God itself made him relegate the commentator to a very secondary role whose only function was to introduce the reader to the text;<sup>(58)</sup> his comments were therefore to be brief, offering merely such explanation as would enable the reader to comprehend the sacred text itself. It could be questioned whether he lived up to his own maxim here - some of his commentaries attained considerable length; but it is true that he did not use a short passage of scripture as a spring-board for a lengthy dissertation on some theological point; when he was "carried away" by his subject the matter of his peroration was usually pious exhortation or edifying anecdote. This same desire for immediate contact also led him to provide vernacular translations of the Scriptures; it could be said that in his case the humanist desire for a return to authentic texts combined very happily with a certain mystique of scripture. This scriptural mystique is probably what prevented him from becoming a great critical scholar,<sup>(59)</sup> but it is also the point which is more interesting from an ecclesiological point of view: did the reading and preaching of scripture come to replace for him the primary function of the authoritative teaching



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Church? Certainly in his days at Meaux he presented the Gospel as the essential rule of life for the Christian, and he did mean the actual printed text which all should have in their hands.<sup>(60)</sup> He also saw evangelical preaching as the primary instrument for promoting personal and ecclesiastical reform, but not as an alternative to other structures in the Church; rather it was to be the means to that inner life of which they were the vehicle and expression.

In providing commentaries which would open up the true literal sense of the scriptures to the reader, Stapulensis did not reject all other resources outside his own insight, but turned to the earlier ages of the Church for help in preference to the mediaeval scholastics whom he so much disliked.<sup>(61)</sup> He edited various supposedly sub-apostolic works, and in his commentaries on the Psalter and the Pauline Epistles occasionally quoted such early writers as Origen, Irenaeus and Ambrose; but his method of exegesis was very far from being a catena of what other recognised authorities had said about the text.<sup>(62)</sup> In Paris before his time some printed bibles had claimed that they were corrected according to the Greek and Hebrew sources; the Glossa Ordinaria, and Interlinea were sometimes supplemented by the postils of Nicolas of Lyra, and some aids to study, printed elsewhere, were available in the shape of handbooks and vocabularies, but these were still relatively few and far between at the beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>(63)</sup> Commentaries in general were still cast in the mediaeval mould adopting some variation on the principle of the four-fold sense of scripture, and postils were offered rather as an aid to preaching than as a method of scientific exegesis. Though some works had begun to break new ground before Stapulensis moved into the scriptural field, he would seem to have taken the break with traditional methods further than his predecessors. He saw Christ - truth itself - as the key to all interpretation of scripture which should be guided by life and experience, by love, and then by presumed supernatural experience. Stapulensis' justification for this method of exegesis lay in the principles and presuppositions with which he approached his work.<sup>(64)</sup>

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His concept of inspiration, combined with his notion of a quasi-mystical union with God for the devout Christian, led him to suggest that the same "divine energy" which used the apostles as instruments to write the scriptures would illuminate the devout reader in understanding them.<sup>(65)</sup> Piety and asceticism would therefore be of more value than academic expertise in comprehending them, since the literal sense was the sense that the Holy Spirit intended when He inspired the prophets or apostles. A second principle he used was that of concordantia scripturarum: where the meaning of one passage is not self-evident the key to it will be provided by another.<sup>(66)</sup> Though the idea of seeing Christ as the key to the meaning of the Old Testament is attractive, Stapulensis' application of this principle did occasionally go to rather extraordinary lengths.<sup>(67)</sup> His intention to write only "intitatory" commentaries, that is, an introduction to the text which could then be read for itself, and an introduction to the Christian life which is one lived in love of God rather than in barren academic speculation about him, may explain the rather slight critical apparatus he provided in his first two scriptural works, and which diminished still further in his later ones.<sup>(68)</sup>

Stapulensis' concept of inspiration and mystical interpretation combined with his humanistic outlook to demand an authentic text in as satisfactory condition as possible. In his scriptural works he set out to provide this, but it seems that his personal equipment for the enterprise may have been rather limited, which might again explain the limited nature of the apparatus he provided. He seems to have been confident of his own competence in Greek but there is dispute about the real extent of his knowledge of Hebrew, and he made an occasional suggestion that a point should be discussed by someone more learned in that language than himself.<sup>(69)</sup>

In preparing his Quincuplex Psalterium published in 1509, Stapulensis hoped to disarm criticism by making reference to Origen's Hexapla, but the device did not



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entirely succeed, since he and his associates were later accused by Noel Beda precisely of "Origenism".<sup>(70)</sup> His method differed from that of Origen: three versions of the psalms are presented in parallel columns being the Latin translations of St. Jerome, made in A.D.383, A.D.392 and A.D.405 respectively; Stapulensis called them the Gallicum, the Romanum and the Hebraicum. Each psalm is followed by a commentary divided at first into four, and later, three, sections. A titulus lists the main themes which occur in the psalm; the Expositio Continua runs through verse by verse explaining each by paraphrasing it, and often adding a suitable reference or application, usually to some other part of scripture. In the first edition of the Quincuplex the psalm verses were numbered by the printer, Henri Estienne, apparently for the first time.<sup>(71)</sup> For the first twenty-six psalms there follows the Concordia, which briefly collects together other similar references in the scriptures. At the end of the concordance on psalm 26 Stapulensis remarked on the obvious repetition involved in these two latter sections of comment, and subsequently dropped the concordance. The last section of each comment is the Adverte which includes more extended treatment and some extraneous matter, though the relevance of this is usually fairly obvious. It is in this section that literary criticism occurs where it is present at all, but it does not play a large part in the psalm commentary, partly no doubt because an attempt at it has already been made in providing a five-fold version of the text. After the final psalm in this section of the book with its commentary, another short introduction precedes the presentation of two further versions of the text of the psalms in parallel columns, described by Stapulensis as the Psalterium Vetus, i.e: the old Italian or pre-Damasus Latin version, and the Psalterium Conciliatum which is Stapulensis' own text emended in the light of the Hebrew. In this part of the book the only extraneous comment is the Argumentum which precedes each psalm (except psalm 1): it is very similar in scope to the Titulus of the earlier part of the book though the main ideas are perhaps listed a little more fully, possibly with

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a more conscious attempt to present the whole impression and ethos of the psalm.<sup>(72)</sup>

It seems possible to find here, apportioned out among the various sections of the commentary, the same sort of introductory material that Stapulensis was accustomed to provide in his editions of the text of Aristotle. Much of his work in that field had consisted of Paraphrases; in his first edition of the Metaphysics he provided an index of the main ideas dealt with in the text. The Annotationes which he used to provide on such texts, explaining some of the more obscure points, would seem to correspond to the Expositio Continua or to the Adverte here, and this latter also contains the sort of material that would have been expressed in the short scholia he sometimes attached to an Aristotelian text when he felt it necessary. This general pattern of a summary of the argument and a list of the main ideas, general explanation in the form of a paraphrase, and more detailed explanation of a few particular points, remained his pattern of commentary throughout his scriptural works, though parts of it became more and more abbreviated.<sup>(73)</sup>

In the Epistolae Pauli, the commentary on St. Paul's Epistles published in 1512, the material is laid out in a slightly different fashion. The entire uninterrupted text of all fourteen Epistles precedes any commentary, and the chapters of these are subdivided into canons, or numbered sections, explained by Stapulensis in his preface and used as a system of reference which is carried through into his subsequent commentary on the text.<sup>(74)</sup> The text is given in two versions in parallel columns, the Vulgate in bold type and Stapulensis' own translation in slightly smaller type. The commentary, printed in still smaller type, forms the second part of the work, laid out in fourteen "books" corresponding to the fourteen epistles. Comment, chapter by chapter, is divided into two sections, the main explanatory section which is now rather more than just paraphrase though still based on that model, and an Examinatio circa literam, a philological, grammatical and textual section. This second section always commences with



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some sort of textual comment, which often acts as a spring-board for a more extensive expression of ideas already mooted in the first section, and so is not substantially different in nature or quality from it. Stapulensis rarely based an argument precisely on a textual emendation, for such emendations normally only reinforced ideas or comments he had already expressed in connection with the text as it stood.

Stapulensis' veneration for apostolic and sub-apostolic sources led him to include a text of the supposed Pauline letter to the Laodiceans after the main part of his commentary on Colossians. After merely general comment on its value in view of its (supposed) authorship, he continued with his Examinatio Circa Literam on the text of Colossians. The Laodicean text, a compilation of phrases from other Pauline texts, should probably be dated from between the fourth and sixth centuries. Stapulensis similarly included the supposed correspondence between Paul and Seneca in his commentary on Philemon, giving six letters from Paul and eight from Seneca. Each received brief general comment before he continued his Examinatio Circa Literam on Philemon. St. Jerome had accepted the authenticity of this correspondence, which probably dated however from the third century. Finally Stapulensis concluded his book with the texts of Lini Episcopi: De Passione Petri, and De Passione Pauli, explaining that it seemed useful to include this work since he had alluded to it a number of times in his Epistle Commentary, but as it was very rare his readers would otherwise have had difficulty in referring to it. These texts would seem to date from the sixth century.

The same features were still included in Stapulensis' later commentaries but in a diminished form. The work, Commentarii Initiatorii in Quatuor Evangelia, published in 1522, presented only one version of the text in bold type, with the commentary in smaller type, printed after each chapter of the text. This is again in two sections and the literary section now precedes the explanatory comment. It has however shrunk merely to Annotationes Breves circa

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Literam, and consists only of a list of the significant or difficult words in the chapter, with their Greek, and occasionally Hebrew, equivalents, accompanied by a Latin synonym or translation. General comment follows of a character not substantially different, (bearing in mind the different nature of the text in question,) from that which accompanied the epistle texts. Here, as there, each paragraph of comment is introduced by quotation of a large extract of the relevant text. An apparatus of marginal references, absent in the Epistle Commentary, here directs the reader to other relevant or parallel portions of scripture and a concordance, based on St. Matthew's Gospel, is prefixed to the whole work.

The work, Commentarii in Epistolas Catholicas, published in 1527, presented the scriptural text in bold type in Stapulensis' own Latin translation, divided into chapters and numbered canons, with commentary, in smaller type, following each chapter. Each section of comment is introduced by lengthy quotation from the text. The critical apparatus is located in a narrow column on the right-hand side of the main scriptural text headed Annotaciones, and consists solely of linguistic equivalents. The word referred to is surrounded by square brackets in the text, and the Greek (and Vulgate Latin where this differs from Stapulensis' own version) equivalents are given. In the body of the text extra words and phrases additional to the Latin Vulgate, where Stapulensis considered it necessary to elucidate this more fully, are indicated by an arrow-head symbol. A more general analysis of the material appears in the Index Contentorum in his Commentariis which lists the topics and subject-matter dealt with. All these three New Testament Commentaries include occasional diagrams and illustrative tables in the body of the text, a feature which had been characteristic of Stapulensis' earlier works.

In his edition of the Latin Psalter published in 1524 Stapulensis prefaced the whole work with some Adnotiuncula explaining his critical apparatus and each psalm is





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preceded by an Argumentum which is virtually a verse-by-verse paraphrase. In the body of the psalm each verse of the Vulgate text is followed by Stapulensis' Latin translation of the Hebrew text, and sometimes by that of the Chaldaean text where he thought there was a significant difference.<sup>(75)</sup>

Stapulensis' various translations of the bible into French, made from the Vulgate text with some emendations in the light of Erasmus' Greek text of the New Testament, contain no formal commentary; in each case his intentions are set out in an introductory epistle, and then his own contribution, beyond the actual translation, is confined to an Argumentum or summary of content and ideas placed at the head of each chapter, or in parts of the Old Testament, each book.

The work, Les Epistres et Evangiles des Cinquante et Deux Sepmaines de l'An, also discussed below in chapter 4, does not modify the picture of Stapulensis' biblical scholarship in a way significant for the present study.

In using this material to discern Stapulensis' ecclesiology it does not seem to be of great significance what part of a particular commentary an idea comes from; the textual apparatus is not sufficiently sophisticated to make a substantial difference to the expression of his views in different places. What may be relevant is the date of the work concerned. Apart from a few chance indications we know little about how long the composition of each commentary or translation occupied him, and I have not been able to discover significant shifts of viewpoint within the limits of one work; this would support the view that they were generally the result of continuous application, and not the productions of long drawn-out periods of time punctuated by intervals of other literary activity.<sup>(76)</sup> It seems reasonable to trace only three distinct phases: the ideas expressed in the Psalter and the Pauline Commentary, in 1509 and 1512 respectively, will be considered together in chapter 3 and here it seems possible, in general, to attribute variations of view to the nature of the subject

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matter being commented upon. Chapters 4 and 5 will analyse the ecclesiology of the later group of scriptural works published between 1522 and 1527. The French translation of the Bible, published in 1530, will be considered separately in chapter 6, to see what light it might throw on his views during the last years of his life.



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### APPENDIX I: Scriptural Texts used by Stapulensis

Apart from the limited information given below in chapter 6 it does not seem possible to establish with certainty what texts of the Bible, printed or manuscript, Stapulensis used for his various scriptural works, since he never identified them precisely in any surviving work. The references which do occur are usually of a general nature: "psalteriis hebraicis vetustis et manuscriptis" (QP.Concil.XXV), "codices Graeci" (Eph.III,C.10), "codices Latini" (Eph.VI,D.26), "codices nostri" (Eph. VI,D.26), "vetustis codicibus Latinis" and "recentioribus codicibus Latinis et Graecis" (Lk.IV, 46). On four occasions references are a little more precise: in the Preface to the Quincuplex Psalterium Stapulensis mentioned that he had made use of triple psalters copied out for him by Carthusian and Celestine monks, but did not specify where or when this was done; in his comment before psalm XXV in the Conciliatum version in the Quincuplex Psalterium he referred to a Hebrew text which he had handled made by "Vuil. Ramundus Mithridates", which however he rejected as being less reliable than the version he had found in the "psalteriis hebraicis vetustibus" mentioned above; in his Apologia, prefacing his corrected version of the Vulgate and included in his Epistole Pauli, he mentioned how he had found, "in an old library" a volume of the Book of Job, which he had had transcribed by his Polish associate John Solidus, but he gave no further details of time or place; finally, in the preface to his Latin edition of the Psalter produced in 1524 he mentioned having "Hebrew and Chadaean translations to hand" (i.e. the translations of Felix of Prato and Augustino Guistiniani, cf. chapter 4 below).

Stapulensis seems always to have based his work on the Vulgate text, even when he claimed to have corrected or amended this in accordance with Greek or Hebrew sources. The text of the Psalter he presented in his 1524 Latin version is the same as the Gallican Psalter in his Quincuplex, that is the translation made by St. Jerome in

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A.D. 392, and commonly used throughout the western church. What text or edition of the Vulgate he was using at any given period cannot be established without very extensive and minute collation of several examples. It may be plausibly conjectured, however, that he made some use of manuscripts found at St. Germain-des-Prés in 1524 by Robert Estienne, and used by him as the basis of his own revision of the Vulgate text in 1527-8 and again in 1532. (See Bible, (Paris, 1532) Robert Estienne, Preface; also T.H. Darlow and H.F. Moule, Historical Catalogue of Printed Bibles in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society, (London, 1903), Vol. 3, p. 927, No. 6112). Such a conjecture is supported by one reference made by Stapulensis himself to "...vetusto quodam codice, coenobii divi Germani Pratensis ad muros Parisiensis siti...". (Lk. IV, 46). It would also seem to be supported by a limited collation of selected variant readings in the text of the Pauline Epistles and the Gospels, where Stapulensis' reading differs from one or all of the following versions: Venice, 1478, Leonardus Wild for Nicolas of Frankfort; Lyons, 1512, Albert Castellanus for Antony Koberger; Alcala, 1514, the Complutensian Polyglot, but coincides with that of Estienne's 1532 text.

In 1512, when correcting the Vulgate version of the Pauline Epistles, Stapulensis endeavoured to divert the expected shock and criticism by including an Apologia which sought to demonstrate that the Vulgate text of the Epistles was not the work of St. Jerome, but in fact an older Latin text. The gist of his argument was that in Jerome's commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians he can be detected as referring critically to the Old Latin version, and to the Vulgate as though both were distinct from his own work. Stapulensis further argued that Jerome said he had corrected the Vulgate text in accordance with the Greek; the contemporary Vulgate text was so corrupt and faulty that it manifestly had not been corrected! He concluded that Jerome's version had been lost, and in places in his commentary occasionally went to some lengths to demonstrate how a given passage could not be



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the work of Jerome. (e.g: Comm. in Gal.V, D.33). This attitude aroused the expected criticism from theologians in both Rome and Louvain in 1514-1515, but Stapulensis left the further defence of his position to others, such as Clichtove (see Jodocus Clichtoveus, Responsio ad Nonnullas Impugnationes Aliquorum Locorum in Commentariis Jacobi Stapulensis super Epistolas Pauli positorum, Paris, Bibl.Maz. ms.1068, fol. 229r-233v), and the Cardinal Archbishop of Senigallia (see Chapter I note(56)). The Apologia appeared in all the subsequent editions of the Epistola Pauli, but Stapulensis does not seem to have pursued the argument further in the later stages of his career when he was translating the New Testament into French "from the Vulgate". (Cf. chapter 6 below).

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### APPENDIX II: Works Published by Stapulensis

The published works of Stapulensis are here categorised according to the three aspects of his scholarship considered in the foregoing chapter: humanistic, theological and spiritual, and scriptural, and are listed in chronological order of publication. The works listed are only those to which Stapulensis contributed some original composition, either the original translation, an introduction, or notes and commentary. Works published under his aegis but to which he added no original composition in preparing an edition for the press have not been included here. In the first two categories only the first edition of a work is mentioned; in the list of scriptural works, all the editions which came out during Stapulensis' own lifetime have been noted. The main sources for this bibliography are the extensive bibliographical appendix given in Rice: Prefatory Epistles, and the list given in Renaudet: Préréforme. References to, or quotations from works included in the first two categories have been taken from modern printed editions throughout this thesis unless otherwise stated; sixteenth century editions have been used for all quotations from Stapulensis' scriptural works (except in notes (65) and (66),  
though Latin spelling has been modernised.

#### I. PHILOSOPHICAL AND HUMANISTIC WORKS:

- 1492: Totius Aristotelis Philosophiae Naturalis Paraphrases, Paris, Jean Higman.. 1492.
- 1492: Marsilius Ficinus. Liber de Triplici Vita, Paris, Georges Wölf, 1492.
- 1494: Introductio in Metaphysicorum Libros Aristotelis, Paris, Jean Higman, 1493/4.
- 1494: In Aristotelis Ethica Nichomachea Introductio, Paris, Antoine Caillaut, 1494.
- 1495: Textus de Sphaera Johannis de Sacrobosco cum Additione adiecta, Paris, Jean Higman, 1494/5.
- 1496: Arithmetica Decem Libris Demonstrata; Musica Libris Demonstrata Quattuor; Epitome in Libros Arithmeticos Divi Severini Boetii, Paris, Jean Higman and Wolfgang Hopyl, 1496.



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- 1496: Introductiones Logicales, Paris, Guy Marchant, 1496.
- 1497: Decem Librorum Moraliu Aristotelis, tres conversiones, Paris, Jean Higman and Wolfgang Hopyl, 1497.
- 1503: Libri Logicorum ad Archetypos Recogniti, cum Novis ad Litteram Commentariis, Paris, Wolfgang Hopyl & Henri Estienne, 1503.
- 1503: Epitome Compendiosaue Introductio in Libros Arithmeticos Divi Severini Boethii; Insuper Astronomicon, Paris, Wolfgang Hopyl and Henri Estienne, 1503.
- 1504: Totius Aristotelis Philosophiae Naturalis Paraphrases, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1504.
- 1504: Liber Ethicorum Aristotelis Johanne Argyropilo Byzantio traductore, adiecto familiari Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis Commentario, Paris, Jean Granjohn, 1504.
- 1504: Onosandri Viri Clarissimi ad Q. Verannium de Optimo Imperatore eiusque Officio Opusculum Plane Divinum, Paris, Badius Ascensius, 1504/5.
- 1506: Politicorum Libri Octo Commentarii; Economicorum Duo Commentarii; Hecatonomiarum Septem; Economiarum Publicarum Unus; Explanationis Leonardi in Oeconomica Duo, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1506.
- 1508: Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis in Politica Aristotelis Introductio, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1508.
- 1508: Georgii Trapezontii Dialectica, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1508.
- 1515: Continetur hic Aristotelis Castigatissime Recognitum Opus Metaphysicum a Clarissime Principe Bessarione Cardinale Niceno Latinitate Foeliciter Donatum xiiii libris distinctum; ...Item Metaphysica Introductio quatuor Dialogorum Libris Elucidata, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1515.
- 1517: Euclidis Megarensis Geometricorum Elementorum Libri XV, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1516/7.

## II. THEOLOGICAL, SPIRITUAL AND MYSTICAL WORKS:

- 1494: Mercurii Trismegisti Liber de Potestate et Sapientia Dei per Marsilium Ficinum traductus, Paris, Wolfgang Hopyl, 1494.
- 1498/9: Theologia Vivificans; Cibus Solidus; Dionysii Celestis Hierarchia; Ecclesiastica Hierarchia; Divina Nomina; Mystica Theologia; Undecim Epistolae; Ignatii Undecim Epistolae; Polycarpi Epistola Una, Paris, Jean Higman and Wolfgang Hopyl, 1498/9.

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- 1499: Libri Remundi pii Eremitae; Primo: Liber de Laudibus Beatissime Virginis Mariae, qui et Ars Intentionum Apellari potest; Secundo: Libellus de Natali Pueri Parvuli; Tertio: Clericus Remundi; Quarto: Phantasticus Remundi, Paris, Guy Marchant, 1499.
- 1504: Pro Piorum Recreatione: Epistola ante Indicem; Index Contentorum; Ad Lectores; Paradysus Heraclidis; Epistola Clementis; Recognitiones Petri Apostoli; Complementum Epistolae Clementis; Epistola Anacleti, Paris, Guy Marchant for Jean Petit, 1504.
- 1505: Pimander; Mercurii Trismegisti Liber de Sapientia et Potestate Dei; Asclepius; Eiusdem Mercurii Liber de Voluntate Divina; Item Crater Hermetis a Lazarelo Septempedano, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1505.
- 1505: Primum Volumen Contemplationum Remundi duos libros continens: Libellus Blaquerne de Amico et Amato, Paris, Guy Marchant for Jean Petit, 1505.
- 1507: Theologia Damasceni: De Ineffabili Divinitate; De Creaturarum Genesi Ordine Moseos; De iis Que ab Incarnatione usque ad Resurrectionem; De iis Que post Resurrectionem usque ad Universalem Resurrectionem, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1507.
- 1509: Ricoldi Ordinis Predicatorum contra Sectam Mahumeticam, non Indignus Scitu Libellus; Cuiusdam diu Captivi Turcorum Provinciae Septemcastrensis, de Vita et Moribus Eorundem Alius non minus Necessarius Libellus, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1509.
- 1510: Egregii Patri Clari Theologi Ricardi quondam devoti Coenobitae Sancti Victoris iuxta muros Parisiensis de Superdivina Trinitate Theologicum Opus Hexade Librorum distinctum et capitum XV Decadibus. Adiunctus est Commentarius Artificio Analytico, Metaphysicam et Humani Sensus Transcendentem Apicem, sed Rationali Modo Complectens intelligentiam, quod Opus ad Dei Trini Honorem et Piarum Mentium Exercitationem Foeliciter Prodeat in Lucem, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1510.
- 1510: Bernonis Abbatis libellus de Officio Missae quem edidit Rhomae, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1510.
- 1512: Devoti et Venerabilis Patris Ioannis Rusberi Presbyteri, Canonici Observantiae Beati Augustini, de Ornatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum Libri Tres, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1512.



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- 1513: Liber Trium Virorum et Trium Spiritualium Virginum; Hermae Liber Unus; Uguetini Liber Unus; Fratris Roberti Libri Duo; Hildegardis Scivias Libri Tres; Elizabeth Virginis Libri Sex; Mechtildis Virginis Libri Quinque, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1513.
- 1514: Haec Accurata Recognitio Trium Voluminum Operum Clarissimi Patris Nicolai Cusae Cardinalis, Ex Officina Ascensiana Recenter Emissa Est, Paris, Badius Ascensius, 1514.
- 1516: Proverbia Raemundi; Philosophia Amoris Eiusdem, Paris, Badius Ascensius, 1516.
- 1518: De Maria Magdalena, Triduo Christi, Disceptatio, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1517/8.
- 1518: De Maria Magdalena, Triduo Christi, Ex Tribus Una Maria, Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1518.
- 1519: De Maria Magdalena, Triduo Christi, et Una ex Tribus Maria, Disceptatio, Tertia Emissio, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1519.
- 1519: De Tribus et Una Magdalena Disceptatio Secunda, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1519.
- 1519: Contemplationes Idiotae, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1519.
- 1519: Agones Martyrum Mensis Ianuarii, Libro Primo Contenti, Paris, Henri Estienne, 1519.

## III. SCRIPTURAL WORKS:

- 1509: Quincuplex Psalterium: Gallicum, Romanum, Hebraicum, Vetus, Conciliatum, Paris, Henri Estienne, 31 July 1509.

Further edns: Henri Estienne, 13 June 1513.  
Rouen, Pierre Olivier, 15 May 1515.

- 1512: Epistolae Pauli: Contenta: Epistola ad Romanos, Epistola Prima ad Corinthios...Epistola ad Hebraeos. Ad has 14 adjecta intelligentia ex Graeco; Epistola ad Laodicensis; Epistolae ad Senecam sex; Commentariorum Libri quatuordecim; Linus: De Passione Petri et Pauli, Paris, Henri Estienne, 15 December 1512.

Further edns: Henri Estienne, 1515.  
Cologne, Martinus Werdensis, 5 June 1515.  
Paris, François Regnault and Jean de la Porte, 1517.  
Paris, François Regnault, 1531.  
Paris Jean Petit, 1531.  
Cologne, Eucharius Cervicornus, 1531.  
Venice, Giovanni Antonio Garupha, January, 1533.

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1522: Commentarii Initiatorii in Quatuor Evangelia: In Evangelium Secundum Matthaeum; - secundum Marcum; - secundum Lucam; - secundum Joannem, Meaux, Simon de Colines, June 1522.

Further edns: Basel, Andreas Cratander, March 1523.  
- ditto - 1526.  
Cologne, Eucharius Cervicornus, c.1531.

1523: Le Nouveau Testament: Les Quatres Evangiles: Les Choses Contenues en ce present Livre: Une Epistre Exhortatoire; La S.Evangile selon Matthieu; - selon S. Marc; - selon S. Luc; - selon S. Jehan. Aucunes Annotations, Paris, Simon de Colines, 8 June 1523.

Further edns: Paris, Simon de Colines, 7 April 1524.  
Paris Antoine Couteau, 12 October 1524.  
(two different versions of this edition - see Rice: op.cit. p. 563).  
Antwerp, Willem Vorsterman, 22 November 1524.  
Paris, Simon Dubois, 14 October 1525.  
Basel, Thomas Wolf, 1525.  
Alençon, Simon Dubois, November 1529.

1523: Le Nouveau Testament: Les Epistres, Les Actes et L'Apocalypse: Le contenu en cette seconde Partie du Nouveau Testament: Une Epistre Exhortatoire; Les Epistres S.Paul.xiii; Les Epistres Catholiques, vii; Les Actes des Apôtres, i; L'Apocalypse S. Jehan, i, Paris, Simon de Colines, 6 November 1523.

Further edns: Paris, Simon de Colines, 10 January 1524/5.  
Paris, Antoine Couteau, 1524/5.  
Antwerp, Willem Vorsterman, 4 January 1525.  
Paris, Simon Dubois, 19 October 1525.  
Basel, Thomas Wolf, 1525.  
Alençon, Simon Dubois, November 1529.  
Antwerp, Willem Vorsterman, 18 January 1529.  
Lyons, Claude Nourry & Pierre de Vingle, p. August 1529.  
Lyons, Pierre de Vingle, c. 1530.  
Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 1 July 1531.  
Lyons, Pierre de Vingle, a. autumn 1532.  
Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 15 April 1532.  
Antwerp, Johannes Graphaeus, 1532.  
Neuchâtel, Pierre de Vingle, 27 March 1534.  
Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 25 July 1535.

1523/4: Le Psaultier de David: Les choses contenues en ce present livre : Une epistre comment on doit prier Dieu; Le Psaultier de David; Pour trouver les sept psaulmes accoutumes, qui a devotion de les dire; Argument bref sur chacun psaulme pour Chretienement prier, et entendre aucunement ce que on prie, Paris, Simon de Colines, 16 February 1523/4.

Further edns: Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 20 June 1525.  
Paris, Simon de Colines, 17 February 1525/6.  
Alençon, Simon Dubois, 1531 or 1532.



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- 1524: Psalterium David: Argumentis fronti cuiuslibet psalmi adjectis; Hebraica et Chaldaica multis in locis translatione illustratum, Paris, Simon de Colines, May 1524.
- 1525: Epistres et Evangiles Pour Les Cinquante & Deux Semaines de L'An: Les choses contenues en ce présent livre: Epistres & Evangiles pour les 52 semaines de l'an, commençant au premier dimanche de l'advent; pour la nativité de notre Seigneur; deux festes après celle; pour la Circoncision; pour l'Epiphanie; pour la Purification; deux festes après Pâques; l'Ascension; deux festes après Pentecôte; Chacun son lieu selon son ordre; après chacun Epitre & Evangile brève exhortation selon l'intelligence de celle, Paris, Simon Dubois, c.1525.
- Further edns: Alençon, Simon Dubois, c. 1530-34.  
Neuchâtel (?), Pierre de Vingle, c.1534 (?).
- 1527: Commentarii in Epistolas Catholicas: Iacobi Fabri Stapulensis, Theologi Celeberrimi, Commentarii in Epistolas Catholicas; Jacobi, i; Petri, ii; Johannis, iii; Judae, i: Nunc primum ab autore emissi & aediti, Basel, Andreas Cratander & Johannes Behelius, July 1527.
- 1528: Liber Psalmorum cum Tenoribus: ad recte proferendum aptissimis, Paris, Simon de Colines, 1528.
- 1529: Grammatographia: ad Prompte Citoque Discendam Grammaticen, tabulas tum generales, tum speciales continens, Paris, Simon de Colines, October, 1529.
- Further edn: Paris, Simon de Colines, June 1533.
- 1529: Vocabulaire du Psaultier: Vocabularium psalterii pro ingenue indolis Adolescente D.Angolismensi, et Sorore eius D.Magdalena modestissima adolescentula, liberis regis, ac denique pro cunctis rudibus, primum in grammaticis initiandis, Paris, Simon de Colines, 1529.
- 1530: La Sainte Bible en François: translatee selon la pure et entiere traduction de S.Jerome...cum gratia et privilegio Imperiali, Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 10 December 1530.
- Further edn: Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 6 April 1534.
- 1528: L'Ancien Testament: Le Premier Volume de L'Ancien Testament: contenant les cinq livres de Moyse; à savoir: Genèse, Exode, Lévitique, Les Nombres, & Deutéronome, translates en François selon la pure et entiere translation de S.Jerome; Auquels sont contenus les merveilles de Dieu; Avec la Loi, Les Jugemens, les sacrifices et ceremonies commandées de la bouche de Dieu; et aussi les promesses de Christ faites au prophètes, Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 30 April 1528.

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- 1528: L'Ancien Testament: Le Dernier Volume de L'Ancien Testament: contenant les prophètes: a savoir: Esaias, Jeremias, Hezechiel, Daniel, Oseas, Joël, Amos, Abdias, Ionas, Micheas, Naum, Habacuc, Sophonia, Aggeus, Zacharias et Malachias, Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 19 September 1528.
- 1530: L'Ancien Testament: Le Troisieme Volume de L'Ancien Testament: Le Livre de Tobie, de Judith, de Hester, de Job; et les trois livres de Salomon; a savoir: Les Paraboles, Ecclesiaste, et la Cantique de Cantiques; avec le Livre de Sapience et L'Ecclesiastique, et pareillement les deux livres de Machabees, Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 12 August 1530.
- 1532: L'Ancien Testament: Le Second Volume de L'Ancien Testament: contenant pour sa premiere partie: Le Livre de Josue, Le Livre des Juges, et Le Livre de Ruth; contenant pour sa seconde partie les quartres Livres des Rois, Les deux Livres de Paralipomenon, et les quatres livres de Esdras; translatez en Francoys selon la pure et entiere traduction de S.Jerome, Antwerp, Martin Keyser, 1 July 1532.



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## FOOTNOTES

- (1) Cf. Denis Hay, The Italian Renaissance in its Historical Background (Cambridge, 1970) p. 135.
- (2) Cf. chapter 1, notes (23) and (183).  
Basic reference works for the whole of this chapter are Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, and Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. cf. chapter 1, notes (21) and (23).
- (3) See F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, second edition, (London, 1974), article on "Mysticism".
- (4) See Anthony Levi, "Humanist Reform in Sixteenth Century France", Heythrop Journal VI (1965) pp. 447-464.
- (5) Cf. chapter 1, note (17): "...Quapropter ad priores artes reolutus ad emerendas sanctorum virorum preces, cum id insolitudine non possim, libenter emissioni librorum (qui ad pietatem formant animos) operam do; ...".
- (6) Cf. chapter 1, note (3).
- (7) Introductio in Metaphysicorum Libros Aristotelis Paris, (Jean Higman, February 1493/4) "...Suo tempore fecit Deus suos sacerdotes, suos vates et faces quae ad tempora nostra lucent...".
- (8) Totius Aristotelis Philosophiae Naturalis Paraphrases (Paris, Jean Higman, 1492) Prologue: "...Aristoteles ...divino beneficio...nostrae litterariae vitae ducem sese praebuit et nos de caeco ignorantiae carcere pie atque benigne exemit; Immo vero hanc totam sensibilis naturae philosophicam lectionem ad divina tendere et ex sensibilibus intelligibilis mundi parare introitum ...ex illorum diciplinis depromserim quod utile, pulchrum sanctumque putem...".
- (9) Cf. Anthony Levi: op.cit.
- (10) See J. Dagens, Humanisme et Evangelisme chez Lefèvre D'Etaples, pp. 121-134, Courants Religieux et Humanisme à la fin du XVme et au debut du XVIme siècle, Colloquium de Strasbourg 9-11 Mai 1957 (Paris 1959).
- (11) Renaudet: Hum. et. Ren. p. 204.
- (12) Libri Logicorum ad Archetypos Recogniti, cum Novis ad Litteram Commentariis (Paris, Wolfgang Hopyl & Henri Estienne, 1501). Preface: "...Dialecticis tamen et quaque alia seu arte sive disciplina recte is utetur, qui summopere sese intra disciplinae limites accebit continebitque; quos qui egrediuntur non aliter intelligentia deerrant quam navita qui viae exaestu-antis maris ignarus, navem allidit ad scopulos...".

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Stapulensis repeated this comparison with storm-tossed sailors in justifying his arguments concerning the Magdalen in 1517; cf. chapter 1, note (92).

- (13) Libri Logicorum Aristotelis (Paris, Wolfgang Hopyl & Henri Estienne, 1503). Preface to Part III: "...Communes dico quia id argumentationum genus non ex cuiusque disciplinae propriis sed communibus vim suam lucemque recipit principiis; et haec pars in dialecticam diducitur (quae nulli fallaciae tortaeve argumentationi innititur) et in sophisticam, quae apparentibus illudit, non argumentationibus sed captionibus, tota contentionis amica, tota verisipellis, subdola tota...". Stapulensis repeated similar remarks in his Disceptatio Secunda concerning the Magdalen dispute; cf. chapter 1, note (98).
- (14) Cf. chapter 1, note (14); also Comm. in I Tim.4: "...Prophanas autem fabulas...procul ab omni gymnasio Christi arcenda. Illa enim sunt de gymnasio idolorum, quod ei adversatur quod Christi...".
- (15) Cf. Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. p. 210.
- (16) Ibid.
- (17) Cf. Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, pp. 13-16.
- (18) Cf. chapter 3 below.
- (19) Cf. Aegesippi Historiographi Fidelissimi Ac Disertissimi Et Inter Christianos Antiquissimi Historia de Bello Judaico... A Divo Ambrosio Mediolanensis Antistite e Graeca Latina Facta, Cum Eiusdem Anacephaleosi Et Tabellis Congruentiarum Cum Iosephi Libris Etiam De Gestis Machabeorum (Paris, Badius Ascensius, 5 June 1510).  
The dedicatory preface written by Josse Bade (Ascensius) to Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet states that the texts for this edition were gathered in the first place by Stapulensis.
- (20) In this ideal programme of Christian humanistic study Stapulensis differed somewhat from Erasmus. He allotted more space to the general human sciences, and laid greater emphasis on the function of scripture study as a means to mysticism. For him this last was a more valued aim than it seems to have been for Erasmus, and he was perhaps a little more traditional in asserting the need for asceticism in such a programme. Cf. Renaudet: Hum. & Ren., p. 210.



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- (21) "Sunt tamen divina maxima pro parte in hoc opere sub naturalium involucris adumbrata, haud secus ac ignis in silice...". This use of the word and concept of involucrum provides an interesting contrast to Luther's use of the same metaphor to emphasise the concealment rather than the revelation of divine things, e.g. Comm. in Gen. I:2.
- (22) Cf. Renaudet: Hum. & Ren., p. 205.
- (23) Comm. in I.Tim.4: D21: "...Quod quia probatorum dicta, neque adolescentes, neque adolescentum praeceptores, hanc nostra tempestate meditantur, in illis non sunt, illis non immanent, sed et aliena abiguntur pascua, magis infecunda quam solitudines Libycae...".
- (24) Cf. Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.15.
- (25) Cf. Libri Remundi pii Eremitae, de laudibus Beatissime Virginis Marie... (Paris, Guy Marchant, April 1499). Preface: "...Nam et creditur quadam superna infusione dignatus, qua sapientes huius saeculi longe praecelleret...".
- (26) Cf. Theologia Vivificans; Cibus Solidus; Dionysii Celestis Hierarchia... (Paris, Jean Higman and Wolfgang Hopyl, February 1499). Preface: "...et unumquodque quanto magis suae propinquat origini, tanto quoque puriorem suam retinet naturam...Hinc omnium sane scripturarum supremum dignitatis apicem ...obtinere dinoscuntur sacrosancta evangelia.... Porro eloquia proxime et dignitate et auctoritate sequuntur ea hagiographa sanctaque scripta, quae apostolorum auditores ad fidelis ecclesiae instituendam futuram sobolem reliquere. Inter quae sunt divini Dionysii Areopagitae sacratissima opera".
- (27) Cf. chapter 1, note (45) above.  
See also Renaudet: Préréf. pp. 53-67, and Maurice de Wulf, Histoire de la Philosophie Médiévale, 5th edn. Louvain 1924, sections 386-8 and 454-8. English translation by E.C. Messenger, (London, 1926), pp. 200-3 and 287-91.
- (28) See Renaudet: Préréf. p.106.
- (29) Cf. Comm. in I Cor.XV: 119. Other examples of similar remarks occur, e.g. Comm. in Col.II: 5-6.
- (30) Cf. note (28) above, and the bibliography referred to there.
- (31) See Renaudet: Préréf. pp. 160-183, also Salley: Jacques Lefèvre D'Étaples.

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- (32) Cf. Salley: Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples; the thesis of this article, a comparison between Stapulensis and the Windesheim school, is sustained largely by detailed comparison of Stapulensis' Gospel commentary with the Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis.
- (33) It was also in the Rhineland, in 1510, that Stapulensis first came across some of the texts he published in 1513, in the collection: Liber Tristorum Virorum & Trium Spiritualium Virginum, and which seem to have made a considerable impression on him; cf. note (38) below. For details of this publication, see Rice: Prefatory Epistles, pp. 308-315.
- (34) See Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.16.
- (35) Cf. note (25) above, Libri Remundi: "...quae ad sancte instituendam formandamque vitam unicuique necessaria sunt."
- (36) See above appendix II.
- (37) See chapter 1, note (16); also Renaudet: Préréf. p.499, note 5, and p.661-2.
- (38) Cf. chapter 1, note (92). In his first Magdalen pamphlet, Stapulensis followed a severely exegetical argument using only Gospel texts with corroboratory material from the visions of Elizabeth of Schonau. For details of that work, see note (33) above and (61) below.
- (39) Cf. Patris Joannis Rusberi presbyteri...de Ornatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum Libri Tres (Paris, Henri Estienne, August 1512). Preface: "... Cum omnis particularium religionum status...sit quaedam mundi fuga et ad extramundana accessio, sit multorum dividuorum derelictio et ad unum adhaesio, tantum igitur quaeque veritatis habet quantum extramundanis et illi uni quod est super omne unum haeret". Also Comm. in I.Cor.1:3: "...Sunt tamen religionis diversi status et gradus. Nam hi in saeculo manent, Christo servientes. Hi, saeculum fugientes, antris claustrisque se propter Christum occludunt. Omnes tamen, seu in saeculo manentes, at non secundum saeculum viventes, seu saeculi fugam arripiantes et solitudinibus se concludentes, religiosos Christi se nominare debent".

The same attitude can still be detected in the later works, e.g. Comm. in I Pet.cap.2.



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- (40) See Appendix II. Accused by the Syndic of the Sorbonne of flouting church tradition Stapulensis appealed from the mistaken practice of the church in the sixteenth century to the integrity of the early church's teaching; see De Maria Magdalena Disceptatio, 1517 edn. fol.21 v-22v, and Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, fol.2 v-4 v. For a discussion of the hermeneutics involved in this attitude, and the view of the church's teaching authority that it involved, see below, chapter 5.
- (41) Cf. Salley: Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples; also Renaudet: Préréf. pp.596-604, and note (39) above.
- (42) Cf. Quincuplex: Ps.118, Ogdoad 18: "...Intellectus activus solum humanum aut non multo supra, rerum divinarum suscitatur amorem. At contemplativus si excellit, ducit ad extaticum, et divinum intrat silentium altamque quietem..."; also Comm. in Johan.XI: 89: "...rudes...donec accepto spiritu sancto, non ultra ut sibi relictis agerent, sed a spiritu agerentur...tam diversi sunt cum agunt et cum aguntur, quam caro et spiritus. Nam animalis homo, id est rationalis, ut animalis sive ut rationalis agit; et spiritualis homo, ut spiritualis, agitur...".
- Stapulensis may have been influenced here by the neoplatonic attitude discernible in the works of Marsilio Ficino; also by Pico della Mirandola who may have seen the cult of religious experience as a kind of esoteric philosophy; cf. Renaudet:Hum. & Ren; also Préréf. pp.374-8; also Anthony Levi:op.cit. where it is suggested that Stapulensis was projecting his own mystical longings on to Aristotle.
- (43) This would seem to be evidenced by his publication of the Hermetic Corpus in 1505. Apparently he regarded these books as portraying a route to knowledge of divine truth by way of study and asceticism; cf. Renaudet:Hum. & Ren.
- (44) Cf. Quincuplex: Comm. in Ps.79: "...Hic versus ter est repetitus, quod non sine mysterio factum volunt, ob trinam filii dei manifestationem: per fidem, per theophaniam et contemplationem, et tertio per apertam et sine velamento cognitionem. Prima manifestatio purgat, secunda illuminat, et tertia perficit. Prima est incipientium, secunda proficientium et tertia perfectorum atque consumatorum...".

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- (45) Cf. Comm. in Ev. Johan. XVI, 120: "...Etsi illa magnifice supra humanum captum excogitata sint, ubi nihilominus magnificentius fides veneratur Deum in silentio, in theologia apophatica Deum admirando, et divinam ignorationem scientia potiolem reputando. Scientia enim loquitur, Deum laudando in theologia hypophatica, sed nescit quid loquitur. Nam si capit, si intelligit quod loquitur, non est Deus de quo loquitur; siquidem incomprehensibilis et inintelligibilis. Et sacra ignorantia, soror maior natu, eo doctior est, quod ignorat, et scit se ignorare. Scientia autem, soror tenella et iunior, eo indoctior, quod docta est, et se scire putat. Haec, visione excaecatur; illa, caecitate illuminatur....".

It seems clear that Stapulensis owed his concept of docta ignorantia to Nicolas of Cusa; cf. note (37) above and note (47) below.

- (46) Cf. Renaudet:Hum. & Ren, p.202 "...Il a manqué à Lefèvre la faculté de coordonner en un système personnel et vigoureux tous les résultats de son immense enquête à travers les doctrines et les écoles".
- (47) For further discussion of this aspect of his work, see E.F. Rice, Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples and the Mediaeval Christian Mystics, in Florilegium Historicale, Essays Presented to Wallace K. Fergusson, edited by J.G. Rowe and W.H. Stockdale (Toronto, 1971).
- (48) Cf. note (26) above Opera Dion. fol.66 v - 68 v.
- (49) Ethics, 3,7.
- (50) Cf. note (55) below.
- (51) Gal.3:28.
- (52) Cf. Plato, The Republic, Bk.VI, paras. 477-8: the distinction between "knowledge" and "belief"; paras. 507-9: the distinction between "particulars" and "absolute reality" or "form"; paras. 509-10: the distinction between the "visible" and the "intelligible" spheres of the Platonic universe, and the cognitive process based respectively on assumptions based on "images" and those based on "first principles"; para. 517: the "absolute form of the good".
- For a modern discussion of these theories see R.C. Cross and A.D. Woozley Plato's Republic, A Philosophical Commentary (London, 1964) chapters 8 and 9, pp. 166-231.
- (53) Comm. in Rom. II, 15.



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- (54) Cf. Graf:Essai and Jules Bonnet, Les Derniers Jours de Lefèvre D'Etaples, D'Après des Documents Inédits; BSHPF, Vol.XI (1862) pp. 211-216.
- (55) Symphorien Champier, Symphonia Platonis cum Aristotele, et Galeni cum Hippocrate (Paris,; Edictus Ascensius, 1516), fol. 93 v: "...Fabrum nostrum virum esse apostolicum totum, sic ut neque platonius, neque peripateticus appellari gaudeat". Stapulensis: Comm. in Johan. 1:3, "... Nam Christiana prosequimur, non Platonica".
- (56) Cf. chapter 1, note (22).
- (57) Quincuplex Psalterium, Preface: "...Frequens coenobia subii, at qui hanc ignorarent dulcedinem veros animorum cibos nescire prorsus existimavi; ...et ab eo tempore quo ea pietatis desiere studia coenobia periere, devotio interiit, et exstincta est religio...".
- (58) Quincuplex Psalterium, Preface: "...Breven in psalmos expositionem Christo adiutore tentavi..."; Epilogue: "...et cum hoc quasi totius psalterii brevissimum subnectamus epilogum, ut pii quos similis devotio tanget, ex descriptione quod suam iuvet devotionem facile reperiant...". Commentarii Initiatorii in Quatuor Evangelia, Preface: "...Quia ut nox siderum lumine non illustratur nisi prius discussis aeris caliginibus et aere purgato, sic nec ignorantia commentariorum luce nisi prius depulsis mentis tenebris et eadem purgata. Idcirco operam navavimus parandis novis in evangelia commentariis qui tenebras mentis discuterent et in eadem quandam veluti purgationem efficerent...Proinde hos commentarios ne stellae quidem lucenti per noctem assimilari volumus, sed aerae potius purgationi. Tria namque sunt quae maiores nostri posuere... purgatio, illuminatio et perfectio...Inter quae perfectio locum tenet summum, illuminatio medium, purgatio infimum; quo in genere commentarios nostros, qualescumque sunt, collocamus et proinde purgatorios, id est, initiatorios nuncupamus...". Bedouelle:L'Intelligence, p.165, points out that these commentaries are initiatory to Christian life, as well as to the scriptures, in Stapulensis' scheme of things.
- (59) Cf. Psalterium David, Preface: "...Et nescio an usquam magis sit Dei loquela et non fluxae sed consubstantialis loquelae eius (quae Christus Dominus est) expressio quam in psalmis Davidicis ..."; also French Translation of the Second Part of the New Testament, Preface: "... Par lesquelz dictz entendons ques lesdictes escriptures s'appellent evangile et qu'elles ne sont point des

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hommes mais sont de Jesuchrist parlant en eulx et par eulx. Parquoy en moult grande reverence devons avoir les parolles de ce saint nouveau testament..."

Stapulensis' position in his dispute with Erasmus might also suggest that he had, at times, an almost "fundamentalist" reverence for the word of scripture; cf: chapter 1, above.

- (60) Cf. French Translation of the Gospels, Preface: "...Et affin que ung chascun qui a cognoissance de la langue gallicane et non point du latin soit plus disposé a recevoir ceste presente grace...vous sont ordonnées en langue vulgaire par la grace d'iceluy les evangiles selon le latin...affin que les simples membres du corps de Jesuchrist, ayans ce en leur langue, puissent estre aussi certains de la verité evangelique comme ceulx qui l'ont en latin...lequel est le livre de vie et la seule reigle des Chrestiens..."
- (61) Cf. note (40) above.
- (62) Various fifteenth and sixteenth century linguists and grammarians were occasionally cited by Stapulensis, and there are a few, rare allusions to Nicolas of Lyra and Paul of Burgos among the mediaeval commentators. Among the Fathers of the church and early writers and historians, he quotes or alludes to, the following: SS. Ambrose, Anselm, Athanasius, Augustine, Bede, Bernard Cassiodorus, Chrysostom, Clement, Cyprian, Pseudo-Dionisius, Epiphanius, Eusebius, Gregory the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, Hilary of Poitiers, Ignatius of Antioch, Ildephonsus, Isidore of Seville, Jerome, Leo the Great, Pseudo-Linus, Origen, Philo Judaeus, Sophronius, Tertullian, Zosimus.
- Though the spread is wide, quotation or reference is not frequent, except in the case of St. Jerome, whose name appears constantly in the critical apparatus and elsewhere. While Augustine, Athanasius, Ambrose, Irenaeus and Origen appear a number of times, the other citations are rare or isolated examples. The majority appear in the two earlier works, the Quincuplex Psalterium and Epistole Pauli; citation of authorities diminishes markedly in the later works.
- (63) Cf. Renaudet: Préréf. pp. 90-114. For further details see Samuel Berger, Le Bible au Seizième Siècle; (Nancy, 1879). D. Fatio and P. Fraenkel, Histoire de L'Exégèse au Seizième Siècle (Geneva, 1978) and A. Laune, Des Secours dont Lefèvre D'Etaples s'est servi pour sa Traduction Française de l'Ancien Testament, BSHPF vol. L, (1901) pp. 595-607.



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- (64) Cf. Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.16 and p.171, note 34. Various writers have tried to place Stapulensis in the process of evolution in scriptural exegesis. See in particular Heiko Obermann, Forerunners of the Reformation (London, 1967) pp. 281 and ff; also Obermann, From Occam to Luther, Concilium, vol. 7, No. 3, (September 1967); also J.S. Preus: From Shadow to Promise, pp. 86-153.
- (65) Cf. Epistole Pauli, Preface: "...At vero qui mundanum forte attendent artificem, immo qui Paulum ipsum qui iam supra mundum est, quasi hae epistolae sint eius opus et non superioris energiae in eo divinitus operatae, suo sensu ad lecturam accedentes, parum fructus inde sunt suscepturi...et inflati sensu carnis suae, multa extorte iudicantes, circa inania vanescent et tantundem mente aegrofabunt. Quod si cui ita esse cernere conceditur, id non parum est. Assit Christus divinorum auctor munerum, omnibus gratiam donans; datamque conservans et augens conservatam, ut nullus suo sensu iudicet praesumatque iudicans...". ( See Rice: Pref. Ep. p.297)  
For further discussion of his concept of inspiration see Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, pp. 147-50 and 187-9.
- (66) Cf. Quincuplex Psalterium, Preface: "...Me contuli ad primos duces nostros, apostolos dico, evangelistas et prophetas, qui primi animarum nostrarum sulcis divina mandarunt semina et litteralem sacrarum scripturum aperuerunt ianuam; et videor mihi alium videre sensum, qui scilicet est intentionis prophetae et spiritus sancti in eo loquentis, et hunc litteralem appello, sed qui cum spiritu coincidit; ...Quapropter duplicem crediderim sensum litteralem; hunc improprium caecutientium et non videntium...illum vero proprium, videntium et illuminatorum; hunc humano sensu fictum, illum divino spiritu infusum; ... Et ut apertius cognoscatur quam diversus sit hic sensus ab illo...patefaciendum puto exemplis: Secundum psalmis: Quare fremuerunt gentes...etc: ad litteram exponunt Hebraei de Palestinis qui insurrexerunt in David christum Domini; verum Paulus et ceteri apostoli spiritu Dei repleti ad litteram de Christo Domino, vero Messiah et vero Dei filio (ut et verum est et deceat) exponunt..."; (See Rice: Pref. Ep. p.193-4)  
also Translation of the Bible into French, Preface: "...Que sy en aucuns passages d'icelles sont trouvées quelques difficultez...mesme aucunes authoritez, lesquelles de prime face semblent contraires, ce non obstant ne fault pas que l'home incontinent se atteidde en les lisant ou qu'il ymagine de soy mesme quelque gloze ou exposition, mal venant au propos de l'escripture (combien que

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ce luy semble bien dit), mais que les passages obscurs soient clarifiez par autres concordans et plus evidentz..."

- (67) For examples of this, see discussion in subsequent chapters.
- (68) Cf. Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, pp. 162-166.
- (69) In his preface to the translation of the De Fide Orthodoxa of St. John Damascene, which he published in 1507, he remarked that circumstances had prevented him from producing as dignified and elegant a translation as he would have liked, but that he was satisfied that he had accurately reflected the mind of the author.  
On the subject of his knowledge of Hebrew, see chapter 1, note (51) above; also Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.88, note 36. Commenting on psalm 114, in the Quincuplex Psalterium, Stapulensis concluded: "Sed haec hebraicae linguae studiosiores amplius discutiant", 1509 edn. fol. 171 r.
- (70) Annotationum Natalis Bedae (Paris 1526) fol. 44 v: "...post delirantem Origenem ejusdem Arian fontem ...". See above, appendix I, for his denial of St. Jerome's authorship of the Vulgate.
- (71) Cf. Pannier: op.cit. p.535.
- (72) In 1513 a printer in Deventer, Jakob von Breda, produced an edition of the Seven Penitential Psalms, a traditional mediaeval devotional handbook, "cum argumentis et titulis ex Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis editione diligenter appositis". These were taken from this second part of the Quincuplex Psalterium. Further printings of this edition were made by Albert Pafraet of Deventer in 1514, and Peter Quentel of Cologne in 1519. It is not clear whether any of these editions owed anything to Stapulensis' own initiative, or even approval.
- (73) For some further discussion of this method of comment see T.H.L. Parker, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries (London, 1971) pp. 21-34, section on ΠΕΘΟΔΟΣ;  
also Guy Bédouelle; Le Quincuplex Psalterium de Lefèvre D'Etaples, Un Guide de Lecture (Geneva, Droz, 1979).
- (74) In the preface to the Quincuplex Stapulensis refers to the system of canons included in Greek texts of the Gospels by Eusebius and Ammonius, and in Latin texts of the Pauline Epistles by Priscillian; he explains that he has replaced the Priscillian canons with his own because they are only to be found in a corrupt state, and because that numeration system does not agree with his own.



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- (75) Stapulensis took the Hebrew version from the Latin translation of Felix Pratensis, Psalterium ex Hebreo Diligentissime ad Verbum fere Tralatum (Venice, 1515). For the "Chaldaean" he used Augustino Giustiniani's Polyglot psalter, Psalterium Hebraeum, Graecum, Arabicum, et Chaldaeum, cum tribus Latinis interpretationibus et glossis (Genoa 1516). "Chaldaean", together with "Syriac", was another name for Aramaic; cf. M. Françon, Note Sur L'Emploi du Mot 'Chaldaïque' par Rabelais; Etudes Rabelaisiennes, VI (1965) pp. 51-2.  
Cf. A. Laune: op.cit. p.598.
- (76) Cf. chapter I, note (126) above.

Chapter 3: The Concept of the Church which can be discerned in Stapulensis' first two scriptural works, the Quincuplex Psalterium of 1509, and the Commentary on the Pauline Epistles of 1512.

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Whatever the truth of Stapulensis' one-time wish to enter a monastery, his retirement to St. Germain-des-Prés in 1508 does seem to have been associated with a desire for greater peace and quiet to devote to serious study of the scriptures. Concerned to provide a sound and useable text for others for the same purpose he published his Quincuplex Psalterium in 1509, and in 1512 his Commentary on the Pauline Epistles.<sup>(1)</sup> The scholarly nature of these two works indicates that they were addressed to serious students, but he also protested a devotional and pastoral motive in the preface to the Quincuplex Psalterium. Certainly he did not set out to construct a finished theology of the Church, but aware as he was of the need for thoroughgoing reform in the Church, and in the christian life as a whole, his works contain frequent criticism of abuses, laments for the mere externalism of much contemporary practice and constant affirmation of the need for a deep interior personal faith. From such material it is possible to discern how he envisaged the Church, what he considered to be some of its essential characteristics, how men are integrated into the Church and the nature of the salvation it brings them. It has been suggested that he inherited from the Brethren of the Common Life an ideal which sought reformation of the Church not by changing dogma or doctrine nor by discarding form or ritual, but by renewing the souls of men by the preaching, teaching and reading of the Gospel in the vernacular.<sup>(2)</sup> Certainly such a reform programme can be discovered in these works, and the chief interest of his ecclesiology lies in the manner in which he conceived the outward, visible forms as fully synthesised with the inward, spiritual realities to form one complex instrument of salvation.<sup>(3)</sup>



### Chapter 3

#### I: WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Two texts provide the nearest approach Stapulensis ever gives to a comprehensive statement of what the Church is:

The foundation and support of the Church lie in the acknowledgement of the superdivine and super-exalted triad of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; there is nothing greater, nothing more sublime than these. Her structure consists of the elevated teachings and explanations of the twelve apostles. The ordinary teaching of the Church and her sacraments, her faith, her hope and her charity, are more acceptable to God than all the ceremonies that were ordained under the Old Law (Ps.86:1, Ex. Cont.).

And again:

The Vulgate has: Quae est ecclesia dei vivi, columna et firmamentum veritatis. I would prefer to say the 'seat' or 'foundation' than the 'firmament', but it should not then be supposed that the word 'foundation' is being used in the same way as when St. Paul says: No one can lay any other foundation than that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ, for in the sense implied there foundation is appropriate to Christ and not to the Church, which is built up on a foundation but is not itself the foundation; Christ however is the foundation of the Church. The foundations of spiritual things are above and not below as is usual for earthly things. Thus is it said: Its foundations are on the holy mountains. That foundation which can most truly be described as such because of its pre-eminence is above everything else. So when the church is compared with a column those parts of it which are here on earth are not its principle or origin, but its end and conclusion. The parts laid down first are the foundation and those are the heavenly parts, for it is the supernal heavenly forces which are laid down first as the foundation, the 'holy mountains' of the spiritual vision, where God is seated. So it is evident that 'seat' would be a more appropriate translation than 'foundation' and would suit the Church better since God is seated at its summit as though at the top of a column raised from earth to heaven, (I Tim.3:D14).

The considerable fluidity of ideas apparent in this second passage, and the speed with which Stapulensis passes from one aspect of the subject under consideration to another is typical of much of his writing.

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While such a style may well justify the comment that he was a mediocre humanist,<sup>(4)</sup> it would seem to be precisely the characteristic which enables him to harmonise the inner and outer aspects of the Church so closely, and so is intimately connected with the interest of his ecclesiology.

Stapulensis' predominant model for considering the Church, which recurs constantly throughout these works, is that of the Body of Christ. This analogy of St. Paul's was taken up by many of the Fathers of the Church including The Pastor of Hermas and St. John Damascene whose works Stapulensis had himself translated or edited,<sup>(5)</sup> but it seems to have become somewhat less popular from the ninth century onwards, after which the phrase Corpus Christi more commonly referred to the Eucharist. It did occur however in reference to the Church in the works of St. Bernard in the twelfth century, of St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth, of Thomas Netter and St. Catherine of Siena in the fourteenth, and of John of Turrecremata in the fifteenth century;<sup>(6)</sup> Stapulensis' adoption of it was therefore neither new nor surprising but the use he made of it is of considerable interest. Though the explicit phrase: the body of Christ, does not occur in the Psalm Commentary, many related expressions indicate that the thought is present. In the Epistle commentary the phrase is frequently used without qualification in a manner that suggests that the concept is taken entirely for granted.<sup>(7)</sup> It is also used in a qualified manner which makes its import quite explicit; Christ is the head of this body which is the Church: "All the faithful should know that they are to be one body of which Christ is the head" (Rom.12:106).<sup>(8)</sup> The complementary statement that the Church is the body of Christ is also frequently explicit: "All the angels and saints are the body and Church of that all-consummating head" (Eph. 1:4) and variations on the theme that the faithful form the body of Christ occur constantly throughout these



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works.<sup>(9)</sup> Stapulensis further echoes St. Paul's statement that Christ was made head of the Church by God (Eph. 1:2, 4; 2:5), and emphasises that the plenitude of divinity resides in Christ as head (Col.2:6).

For Stapulensis the Church as the body of Christ is both a mystical, spiritual body, and at the same time an earthly, visible body; both aspects are essential and both are inseparably united as can be seen from various passages in his works:

The Vulgate has: Et membra de membro. 'Members' should here be read in a partial sense, for if we say that you are the body of Christ nevertheless you are not all of its members; the Corinthian faithful were not the whole body of Christ. Indeed neither Europe nor Asia nor Africa is capable of containing the plenitude of the body of Christ. That body of Christ I say, to which our bodies are united in a spiritual manner, and with which they are so to speak concorporated, that body fills heaven and earth for it is wherever the Word of God is. The Word was made flesh, consequently the Word is never without the flesh, nor the flesh without the Word. Be careful that bodily imagination does not delude you into multiplying spaces and extending space. This matter is not to be understood in that way; rather it is a matter of plenitude without space, beyond all places, beneath all places, outside and within all places; without space, above and beyond all space, outside and within all space. The body of Christ, by that superspiritual means which is without mean, is not comparable with, nor proportioned to anything, but in the corporeal manner in which it is seen on earth it is susceptible of proportionate comparison. This body admits of proportion and comparison on account of the weakness it assumed, but the other, from the virtue of the One who assumed it, escapes all comparison, all proportionate measurement. Reason joined to imagination cannot reach this, nor yet can it remain rationally within its own confines. Indeed both words and images are absurd, but the highest point of the mind, breaking out of its own limitations and reaching beyond rational thought to the level where concepts neither of place nor space nor number nor multitude nor time operate, can by infused virtue understand it and speak truly of it. Yes, it can speak in so far as the ineffable, the incomparable, the measureless can be spoken, in a certain manner ineffably. (I Cor.12:D91).

While such a passage further illustrates the fluidity of Stapulensis' ideas it also serves to convey how closely

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the physical and mystical aspects of Christ's body are associated in his mind, and brings together a collection of his key ideas on the subject. With St. Paul he insists that the faithful are members of Christ's body; he points out that it is the body, man's earthly, physical being, that is united to the body of Christ, though, as he says, in a spiritual manner. That body of Christ to which our bodies are united as members is his incarnate being: the Word was made flesh; yet Stapulensis underlines the importance of the hypostatic union; following faithfully the doctrine of Chalcedon he implies that it is the infinite being of God, that body which fills heaven and earth, to which the faithful as his members are united. Variation on this theme with some refinement of the meaning occurs elsewhere:

The Vulgate has: Cohaeredit et concorporales et comparticipes. I would prefer to say 'concorpores', for we are made into one and the same body with all the rest of those who are to be saved, not as one physical mass, but as the spiritual body of Christ. If I say 'concorporales', it could be understood as a physical bulk occupying a defined space like other corporeal things. The elements are 'concorporal' with us, for they are bodies and we are bodies; but neither fire, nor air, nor water, nor earth is ever said to be concorporated with us. (Eph.3:A6).

In the same context Stapulensis uses the word "mystical" to clarify the idea:

For as many of us as were dead in sin, vivified by grace and mystically resurrected are part of the body of Christ, and already, in mystery, sit with him at the right hand of the Father. (Eph.2:6).

Further on he dilates on the spiritual mode of our union with the body of Christ:

Those whom he accepts as sons are one body and live in the same spirit; they live in the body of the Son of God and in the Holy Spirit. Do not let us think because we still live in the flesh (though not according to the flesh, if we continue to fight against the world, the flesh and the spirits of the air), that we are not in the same body as all the angels and saints, living by the Holy Spirit and already at the right hand of the Father, present to, and presented to the Father... For Christ has not two bodies but one, not two Spirits but one Spirit (Eph.2:6).



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Extensive illustration of Stapulensis' twofold concept of the body of Christ as both mystical and physical, heavenly and earthly, can be found in a number of passages where he associates the earthly Church closely with its heavenly exemplar, with evident debt to the works of Pseudo-Dionisius:

When the King of glory chooses his apostles and princes, they are made whiter than snow in their life, manners and conversation by the humanity of Christ which is the corner-stone... and they are to form the ecclesiastical hierarchy in imitation of the celestial hierarchy, as was ordained for our first leaders by the Lord Christ, King of heavenly hosts and of all things... consultation of the works of the divine Dionisius, disciple of the inspired and divinely speaking Paul, makes it plain that the Church below was organised by the apostles in the beginning according to the same pattern as the Church above. (Ps.67:15, Ex.Con. and Ps.67:13, Adv.).

It is not inappropriate for St. Paul to exhort his disciples to imitate himself because

the Church of Christ takes the arrangements of its structure and function from heavenly examples even while it is living here on earth and adapts them suitably, so that what is done on earth is the type, the exemplar is in heaven. Thus our true commonwealth is in heaven; what we have on earth is symbolic of it. (Philip.2:11).

It is interesting to see how Stapulensis manipulates this idea of the earthly Church being the type of the heavenly exemplar when dealing with the epistle to the Hebrews where the author has already applied the same notion to the externals of Old Testament worship. Stapulensis introduces a neat distinction:

It is said that those things under the Old Law whose exemplar was in heaven are shadows: what we now commonly do in this world in the worship of Christ is symbol. Just as under the first law a certain purification by means of the shadows of sacred things was necessary, so wayfarers under the law of Christ must be purified by symbols which are fulfilled in the sacraments and most holy ecclesiastical rites. (Heb.9:45). (10)

The twofold nature of the heavenly-earthly Church, this mystical-physical body of Christ, is emphasised when

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Stapulensis repeatedly insists on the oneness of the Church on earth with the Church in heaven. Accepting the traditional distinction between the Church militant and the Church triumphant, he explicitly repudiates any real separation between them:

Although the present Church is not the whole of Christ's kingdom it is nevertheless part of the kingdom of God. Whoever is in part of the kingdom of a king is said to be in his kingdom. Therefore if we are truly faithful we are already in the kingdom of God, and it is in his kingdom that we live and work. (Col. 4:18).<sup>(11)</sup>

The key to Stapulensis' twofold concept of the body of Christ as both physical and mystical lies in his appreciation of the hypostatic union of two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ.<sup>(12)</sup> His works include a number of passages in which he exclaims with wonder at the incredible truth of the incarnation, and at the implications of the fact that God really became man, and he uses such words as secretum and sacramentum to express the wonderful economy of salvation based on the incarnation of the Son of God:<sup>(13)</sup>

O the immense and ineffable, divine and loving clemency towards man! O the incomprehensible depths of mercy in assuming man! O how much more blessed is man than the angels, how much richer in Christ than the angels if he only realised it, and persevered in praise and thanksgiving! This sacrament of the divine incarnation exceeds all astonishment and is greater than all miracles. (Heb.10:48).

The incarnation brings to an end man's period of servitude under a pedagogue because

with the advent of Christ consubstantial with God and with us, Son of God and Son of Man, those who wish to acknowledge God the Father through the consubstantial Son of God who deigns to become our brother, are no longer in servitude to pedagogues, vicars or stewards. What a great proof of the ineffable divine goodness towards us, that, lest on account of our weakness we should doubt that we have such a Father, he sent his own Spirit, the Spirit of his Son into our hearts... that we should dare to call him Father, a name which the angels dare not call him. Whence have we this great confidence? From the humility of his Son who willed to become



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consubstantial with us and was not made consubstantial with the angels, for he was made flesh not angel. (Gal.4:18).<sup>(14)</sup>

Christ's flesh indeed is more real than our own, since it is not vitiated by sin. (Rom.8:63).<sup>(15)</sup>

Stapulensis also embarked on an interesting attempt to express just what consubstantiality means, pointing out that the imago dei invisibilis of Hebrews 1 implies consubstantiality. Consubstantial does not describe something that is a composite of two natures, "bisustant-ualia" or "binaturalia", like "mules or leo-pards", neither does one call such things sons of one or other of the contributing natures

for only the condition of sonship requires consubstantiality, so that if someone is to be called son, even of diverse species, he must have consubstantiality with both the species concerned. (Col.1:3).

Further he discusses the difference between the consubstantiality of Christ with God the Father, and with us; with God he is truly consubstantial, but with man it is not true consubstantiality, although "it is a certain remote adumbration of an imitation of consubstantiality". (Col.1:3).<sup>(16)</sup> The figura substantiae of Hebrews 1 means that Christ is the true and consubstantial Son of God, and in the discussion Stapulensis piles up a number of expressions to underline the reality of this relationship, so vital to his outlook, which also recur elsewhere in his works with the same intent.<sup>(17)</sup> He speaks of a signaculum subsistentiae, consubstantialis impressio imagoque, character hypostaseos (Heb.1:2). Discussion of this relationship of Christ with us, consubstantial, but different from that with his Father, also evokes another of Stapulensis' characteristic platonic themes:

Christ most certainly has two natures, divine and human. His divine nature is the form of God, his human nature is the form of man. The divine is the reality, the human is the image and similitude of the divine. The divine is the archetype and exemplar, the human is the figure. What else could the divine testimony mean when God is portrayed as

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saying: Let us make man to our own image and likeness, but that the human form is the image and similitude of the divine ? (Philip 2:5).

Pursuit of this topic however leads Stapulensis to realise that he may seem to be weakening the force of the truth which means so much to him, and some rather involved reasoning follows, designed to establish that the man Christ is truly God. Clearly the whole notion of consubstantiality fascinated him, and he makes frequent use of the word hypostasis. For instance he assures his readers that Paul's greeting to the Thessalonians really is trinitarian although the Holy Spirit is not explicitly mentioned, because the Holy Spirit is "the gift and consubstantial charism of God". (2 Thess.1:1). The word hypostasis occurs a number of times in the Psalm Commentary in reference to the Trinity (Ps. 8, 41, 42, 52), and occasionally in reference to the presence of the divine Word in the Eucharist (Ps.133). The drift of Stapulensis' thought would seem to be that, in the body of Christ which is the Church, the earthly and the heavenly, the physical and the mystical are united in a manner analogous with the union of the two natures in Christ; more than this - the two aspects of the Church are so united precisely in virtue of the union between the two natures of Christ.<sup>(18)</sup>

Notwithstanding his rejection of the terrestrial elements, Stapulensis' concept of the body of Christ does extend beyond the limits of the human race to embrace a renewed and glorified creation in the pleroma Christi :

Solely by his own good will and pleasure he has made all created things his body so that the plenitude of all things might dwell in him. (Col. 1:3).

Emphasis on this point leads to some slightly surprising expressions:

All creatures will be subjected beneath his feet; even in his assumed humanity he is chief and head of all creatures; he is, so to speak, uncreated creature and created creator... Do not believe that the body of Christ will be complete before the restoration of all things; and then all things



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will be one completely absolute and most perfect animal. (Eph.1:4).<sup>(19)</sup>

At first Paul saw the glory of Christ under the similitude of a single all-beautiful animal, bearing in itself the beauty of all the angels and saints; its head was Christ, of divine and incomprehensible beauty. (Eph.2:7).

Yet this rather physical imagery has to be harmonised with other statements:

Divinity is not to be found in these elements.... on their own, since the fullness of divinity dwells corporally in Christ, or rather in the body of Christ whose head is most full of divinity; by his mercy we, as members of his body, are corporally made sharers of that divine plenitude. (Col.2:7).

Again the body of Christ, made up of the faithful, seems to be considered as both corporeal and mystical at the same time.

## II. THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH

What are the essential characteristics of this body of Christ which is the Church? Stapulensis is heir to a long tradition which interpreted the Canticle of Canticles as a description of the relationship between Christ and his Church as well as between Christ and the individual soul, and he makes use of this spousal imagery on numerous occasions.<sup>(20)</sup> Christ prays to his Father for his spouse the Church (Ps.34:20, Ex. Cont. Ps.44, Tit.). The same point is made more strongly when Stapulensis contrasts the carnal reading of scripture with the reading of it in a spiritual sense: anyone who reads the Epistles of St. Paul should put off the flesh and put on the spirit which is given from above by committing himself to reading them as the epithalamium of the heavenly bride and bridegroom (Gal.5:27). The wounds in the crucified hands and feet of Christ and his opened side are seen not only as proofs of his love and faithfulness, and a way through the previous hostility between man and God, but precisely as the clefts in the wall, the caverns in the rock to which he invites his spouse the Church (Heb.3:12).

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St. Paul's point about human marriage being the image of the relationship between Christ and his Church is taken up at some length: just as in paradise Adam represented Christ and Eve represented the Church, and Eve was formed from the bone and flesh of Adam, so the Church is formed from the flesh and bone of Christ. The espousal of Adam and Eve is the espousal of Christ and the Church for whose sake the world was made:

God wanted to declare to us how sublime and elevated is the bond between Christ and his Church, when he declared that it is closer than that with father and mother, or any other kind of affinity. And we who are still carnal, even though we do not see the great mystery enacted around us, are nevertheless surrounded by this great sacrament. For every husband is the symbol of Christ the true and eternal spouse, and every wife is the sign of the Church the immaculate bride. Let the man therefore take care not to sully his reflection of Christ, and the wife similarly be careful that she does not impurely or unworthily represent the Church. (Eph.5:21).

Such imagery of course emphasises the closeness of the union between Christ and his Church. What response can we who are members of the Church make for Christ's love? We should cleave to him more closely than to father or mother, wife or children, and never seek a separation, for God has made this union infinitely closer than that between man and wife. That is the shadow, this is the light; that is the vestige, this is the truth (Eph.5:21). So Stapulensis sees the synagogue as the bride of Moses bound to him by law, and the Church as the bride of Christ free from the law (Rom.7:52). Theocrita was St. Paul's mother according to the flesh and his mystical mother was the synagogue, but the bride, the Church, had better wines and ointments (Gal.1:4).<sup>(21)</sup>

The purpose and effect of this spousal union is of course salvation: "I have sought from God the Church as my bride; I have sought her in order to save her; although she deserted me in the battle and fled, still I seek her" (Ps.26:7, Ex.Cont), and the concept of the Church as virgin spouse easily passes into that of the Church as virgin mother: "Let both peoples (Jews and



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Gentiles) now become one, acknowledging Christ as their father and the Church as their mother, themselves as begotten by the Holy Spirit, free sons of the free woman" (Gal.4:23). "Your neighbour is first and foremost your fellow christian, son of the same father, God, and the same mother, the Church" (I Thess.4:16). Conversely non-christians do not have quite the same close relationship with us "for they are not re-born of the fruitful virginity of the spouse and bride in the holy kiss of the Holy Spirit". Christians should not repay evil for evil as though they were children of the ancient serpent, but being children of that dove, the Church, who has no venom, they must recognise and demonstrate who is their mother (I Thess.5:23,8).

Logically therefore this Church is the only home of the faithful. Their first home was the synagogue which took its origin from Mount Sinai, but their second home is the Church which took its origin from the mountain of God who is Christ, on which, and by which the new law was given. As the earth was moved when the first law was given, so he also moved heaven, since he came from heaven and opened what was closed (Heb. 12:77). A bishop then is elected to rule not an earthly household but part of the Church which is the house of God (I Tim.3:14). As the home of the faithful the Church is the only source of salvation; it is in the bosom of the Church of Christ, and not outside it, that the mercy of God is received (Ps.47.Concil). We cannot enter the kingdom of heaven without true circumcision which is baptism (Philip 2:9); "If you do not adhere to the head... you have no access to the Father; you are a child of wrath and excluded from the reconciliation of the Son of God" (Eph.2:6).

Perhaps the most significant consequence of Stapulensis' concept of the Church as the body of Christ and of the most intimate possible union between the inner and outer realities involved, was his conviction of the importance of unity in the Church and his abhorrence of schism.<sup>(22)</sup> Sentiments of this sort occur so frequently

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as to form a major theme in these works. Christ has only one body, not more than one; the faithful therefore necessarily form one and the same body or they are not members of the body of Christ. United with Christ they are necessarily united with each other.

There is only one foundation for religion; it has only one measure and one head, Christ...the religion of Christ is one; he alone should be awaited, looked up to, proclaimed...if we proclaim some other name we become like those whom Paul reprehended, setting up various norms, each forming his own sect and thinking himself the better. If we thus think others of no value and esteem only our own, are we not arrogating to ourselves the eternal judgement of the Lord?... Is Christ divided? Is his religion divided?... What else can I say to you brethren except to beseech you in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all say the same thing, that you should all be perfectly of one mind and of the same opinion, otherwise your religion is not religion but a sort of superstition. Is it not much better to serve Christ in the world and to maintain charity with all men on account of the most sweet name of Christ, than to flee to caves and hiding-places and to rend charity apart? Your heads are united with each other (who indeed are not heads but with you members of the body of Christ), and they look to no other except to Christ. (I Cor. 1:3). (23)

Since Christ has only one body we now speak no longer of Jew and Gentile, but we use only the name "christian" taken from Christ. All have been collected into this one Church, this one body of Christ with the angels and saints in order that they might form one and the same temple of God. The means to this unity is the Spirit of Jesus; this body is vivified by, lives by the Holy Spirit; just as there are not two churches, in heaven and on earth, because Christ has not two bodies but one, so there are not two churches because there are not two Spirits but one (Eph. 2:6). Our justification is the work of the whole Trinity, and aspects of it are appropriated to the various persons of the Trinity; to the Spirit is appropriated the function of making us one and undivided (2 Cor. 13:14). Such unity pertains to the visible body of Christ and Stapulensis makes it the necessary prelude to the final, perfect, all-consummating union which will accompany the beatific vision; this he says is what



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Christ was praying for at the Last Supper, that all might be one in him as he and the Father are one. Therefore we must preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, that is "the unity of the body of Christ, which is the one, holy, catholic Church" (Eph.4:11). This unity which pertains to the mystical body of Christ is a supernatural characteristic, and the intimacy and firmness of our union with Christ is demonstrated by the irrelevance of differences between masculine and feminine:

For in Christ there is neither masculine nor feminine; these names belong to the weakness of the flesh, but a more sublime name arises, one and the same, firm, strong and robust; what could be more one, what could be more the same, than that the highest degree of unity should be joined to the highest degree of identity. (Tit.3:A7).

Other gradations and variations are equally irrelevant, and must be in no way allowed to prejudice unity:

For although there are variations among the saints and in the grades of salvation as in one body there are different members, and in one building different joints, nevertheless the mode of salvation is the same for all - co-inheritance, concorporation and comparticipation in the eternal beatitude of Christ. (Eph.3:9).

Such unity however does not preclude that variety in the Church which is part of God's design. "Let no one consider so much what he is or what another is, but rather whose he is; all are Christ's; all are members of Christ and therefore co-members of each other" (I Cor.11:90).

The gifts of the Spirit are excellent but they are specific gifts and not all are necessary to every member of the body of Christ for salvation. (I Cor. 13:92).

This need to conciliate the aspects of unity and variety is developed at some length, and includes some interesting comparisons. Is it not obvious that those who are united to the same thing are united to each other? All are united with the body of Christ in Holy Communion, one and the same thing; and all are baptised by one and the same Holy Spirit. Since the Spirit of Christ and the body of Christ are not divided, Christ and the Holy Spirit are like the centre of a circle; the faithful are like countless

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lines going out from the centre and flowing back from the circumference to the centre. The virtue of Christ and of his Spirit is like the circumference containing everything, conserving and nourishing everything. As among these lines some are the highest, some are median and some are lowest, and one is not another, but all are nevertheless contained in the unity of the circle, so in the body of Christ some members are highest, some are median and some are lowest, and one is not another, but all united to the body of Christ are one body. All of them together with Christ form, so to speak, the concentrated Christ (I Cor.11:86-90). Variety among the gifts of the Holy Spirit is similarly treated by comparison with the rays of the sun, to emphasise the need for variety in unity. The body will not reach its perfect completion, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ without this variety (Eph.4:C13), and such variety has a function in teaching the doctrine of Christ: just as he himself came into the world a servant, poor and virgin-born to teach every aspect of his doctrine, so if all the different categories in the Church live out their own vocation within the unity of one church, they will, together, illustrate the whole of Christ's teaching (Tit. 2:9).

Such variety in the body of Christ demands a system of right ordering. There is a correct polity for the body of Christ in which there is no dissidence among the members who all live by one Spirit - not too diffuse, not too cramped, but stable and erect, reaching towards the heights, all animated by one mind (Philip.2:4). The differentiation among the gifts of the Holy Spirit means that the order that Christ willed for his body is not to be upset by proud ignorance, and Stapulensis laments the perversion of this order at some length (Rom.12:l07). Discussing the various forms of exemption from authority current in his own time he prefaces his remarks with the assertion that since the powers-that-be are ordained by God they must also be



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orderly; disorderliness is a sign that such powers are not from God but are deviations and abuses. Pseudo-Dionisius is again the predominant influence on his thought here: "It is a confusion, deviation and distortion if priests resist their bishops, just as if the angels refused to obey the archangels and wanted to obey only God". Those who refuse to obey will themselves be refused obedience (Rom. 13:110).

Besides an ordered polity, the means to unity in variety in the Church is of course charity, a theme to which Stapulensis often returns. The love that builds up Christ's body and binds the members together is primarily God's love, not man's. It is not a reflection of the love of God but its direct action, but only those who do reflect the rays of this love are admitted into the building which is Christ's body. This love is like the architect's blueprint: according to it the body of which Christ is the head is daily increased; from it the whole body derives its harmony, connection and co-ordination throughout the whole range of ways in which the various members are adapted to their various functions; according to it each member receives that growth and increase appropriate to his own measure (Eph.4:13). For Stapulensis this blueprint is again a Platonist one:

Our whole good is in the imitation of Christ; his life is the exemplar of ours, his love the form and idea of our love, so that for the sake of him who loved us we should so love each other that we would rather die than offend our neighbour, than offend a member of Christ in whom Christ is formed, and in whom the Spirit of Christ lives. (Eph.5:17).

Such love will be apparent in the concord which should be seen among members of the body. At his resurrection "Christ places in his Church those who are of one mind and one heart" (Ps.67:6,Ex.Cont). Redemption by the blood of the cross inserts men into the body of Christ, into that concord which binds all the members of the

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body together, (Col. 1:3). Such concord will be fostered by fulfilment of the precept Love your neighbour, and assisted by a humble demeanour. While we should retain our own particular religious observances, since we bear the name of Christ we must maintain charity towards all without which there is no religion.<sup>(24)</sup> No one should dare to think himself better than others, or to judge another of his Lord's servants. It is not the service which glorifies the servants, but far beyond this, it is the goodness of the master which glorifies them. To usurp for himself the judgement of his master is pride (I Cor. 1:13). Mutual assistance among the members of the body will cement their unity; to refuse to perform the classical works of mercy is to refuse to help a member of Christ, and so to refuse Christ himself (I Thess. 5:6). We must not please ourselves but be concerned with what will help the salvation of others (Rom. 15:123). Two particular forms of help, besides mutual prayer, attract some attention: although God wants to give himself to us he does require some preparation on our part, with his help, and in this sphere we can help our neighbour to prepare to receive Christ also, precisely by using the strength which we ourselves receive flowing from the head of the body (Col. 4:16). Similarly when a member of the body appears so fruitless as to be in fact dead, other members must make the kind of effort Christ would make to stimulate and revivify that member. With an



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attitude of love we must treat that member as a friend and brother, not an enemy; this is what Christ would want the members of his body to do and we must always follow the pattern of the head. One baptism, one regeneration has made us all one body, made us brothers; what is becoming to brothers is the highest concord and peace, especially to those brothers whose father is peace itself, the author and Lord of peace (2 Thess. 3:9).

Spiritual men will prepare a worthy dwelling-place for the Holy Spirit, a peaceful Spirit who flies from hatred and contention, a Spirit of unity who can by no means live with hateful schism and divisions ( I Cor. 3:9). The condemnation of schism is a recurrent theme and it becomes almost a maxim with Stapulensis that such things come from the devil and are caused by evil spirits. Just as one Spirit, one Lord, one God is the source of a variety of gifts which do not, or should not, cause divisions, conversely it is an evil spirit who divides and distributes gifts and ministrations which lead to lying and falsehood. What such an evil spirit bestows is profitless, builds up nothing, saves nothing, but merely overturns and destroys; thus can the gifts of the Holy Spirit be distinguished from the promptings and suggestions of the evil spirit; the

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Holy Spirit is one and the same, the evil spirits are many and diverse. So the Gentiles can be united in neither body nor spirit, they have so many spirits of error tearing their bodies and spirits apart (I Cor.11:86). Concord and unity can in fact be almost equated with the truth of the Gospel:

Now that we have reached this state (for we have reached Christ in symbol, the light of the Hebrew shadow though we have not yet attained full comprehension), we must all follow the same rule and have the same mind, for our rule is the Gospel of Christ in all concord and agreement. Where there is diversity, where there are sects, where there are heresies, there agreement and truth are not to be found. I use the word 'truth' symbolically here, for it has a higher exemplar which is that scope and reality and predestined measure towards which Paul...was always pressing forward. (Philip. 2:10).

In view of the period under consideration, 1509-1512, it is tantalising not to be able to discover with certainty precisely what sects, or false doctrines Stapulensis had in mind in these strictures about heresy and schism. At one point he gives a lengthy definition of "heretic" which throws some light on his own position, but does not tell us as much as we might like. His general starting point is the fact that there are "sects", or (in modern parlance) different schools of thought, in human disciplines such as philosophy, geometry or medicine, and these are good or bad to the extent to which those involved in them present the views of the original author or teacher with fidelity, or conversely, merely present themselves instead of someone else.<sup>(25)</sup> Such a situation is more serious however when divine things are in question. Here the criterion of good and bad distinguishes those who adhere to God and acquiesce in the understanding of divine things, from those who are cut off from God and oppose the correct understanding of divine things, that is the interpretation of the Holy Spirit. The latter are exemplified by the Sadducees, while the former are to be seen in the Essenes, and in most of the Pharisees. As long as something is not



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wholly cut off from the foundation it is not called a "sect" (the deliberate Latin pun is lost in English), but a group or sect which is cut off from what forms the fundamental basis is estranged, cast away, and indeed literally cut off rather than united. True "sects" (i.e.: schools of thought, or groupings) are not therefore called sects, for those who belong to them do adhere to God who is the foundation and basis for the understanding of the things of the spirit; they are not "sects" in the literal sense of that word, for they are still in union with God. Bad or real "sects" on the other hand are entirely cut off for their members are separated from those who adhere to the foundation:

All who have received the washing of regeneration are united and adhere to the foundation, so we do not call heretics those who live holy lives in true sects or groupings. Far from being cut off they are inserted into the foundation by their holiness of life and by the integrity of their understanding which is guided by the Holy Spirit. We only call heretics those who are cut off from the foundation in both senses: those who are cut off from God and from the correct interpretation inspired by the Holy Spirit are and can be called heretics; if they are only cut off by the impurity of their lives they are called sinners and apostates, but if they are cut off by their perverse understanding of the Spirit and the things of faith, they are not only sinners but also heretics. (Tit. 3:16).

Thus divisions made according to a contrary understanding of the Spirit are specifically said to be heretical, and an example of this would be the denial of the immortality of the soul. After two admonitions such a person must be avoided as a heretic, and if this is so it is all the more incumbent on bishops to avoid such persons. The word heretic is not normally applied to pagans:

Of course Democritus, Epicurus and their like are not called heretics because they have never been united with the Lord either by circumcision or baptism, but he who has been initiated by the sacraments of Christ and afterwards adopts their views, (i.e. pagan philosophy) is truly a heretic cut off from Christ to whom he once adhered.

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Others are merely called unbelievers; I do not deny that a heretic is an unbeliever who holds perverse views about the faith, but he has become an unbeliever from among the faithful, for the washing (of baptism) makes every one a believer. The rest are altogether unbelievers who have never been believers. (Tit.3:16).

The technical definition of heresy adopted by Stapulensis here is familiar and clear enough. What is not made fully clear either here, or anywhere else in these works, is what he really meant by a perverse interpretation of the Holy Spirit, or of the foundation of christian teaching, nor what precise doctrines he would have regarded as totally unacceptable. In view of his references to the Jews, Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and to the pagans Epicurus and Democritus, it seems that he would have adopted a fairly basic and limited creed as the summary of essential Christian truth whose denial constituted heresy. This suggestion of a fairly wide tolerance may have some bearing on his apparent refusal to take an intransigent stand even on the more serious controversial questions of his day.<sup>(26)</sup> He does indulge in lengthy discussion of, and warning about, the dangers of Gnosticism and the Gnostics of Asia with the names of several Neoplatonists listed; is this because he felt the dangers to which the renaissance humanist was exposed in this area, notwithstanding the neoplatonist traits in his own works? (2 Tim.1:6). In a passage where he purports to be giving specific advice to those who need help in the matter he does seem to be addressing his own times:

Examine all things and retain only what are genuine prophecies...I certainly know many in our times who have followed the spirit of error. When they first began to form into groups I was hesitant as to whether they were led by a good or an evil spirit, but gradually through many meetings at which they exposed various points more clearly, and I weighed and examined each of these things for myself, their delusion became apparent. I warned them of this, which they came to discover was true, both by the investigation of other people and by their own danger. They were brought to that evil by their own curiosity. So when such things happen they are to be tested, proved and examined; if you are not capable of such examination yourself, get others you can rely on to do it for you, who are moved by



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the fear and love of God and not by vain curiosity. If after suitable investigation (by the grace of God) you find it to be good, retain what is in accordance with apostolic doctrine, otherwise reject it, for here there are many terrible and horrible perils. (I Thess.5:23,14).

One would like to know what particular sects, groups or conventicles Stapulensis was thinking of here. (27)

He alludes to two other types of erroneous opinion: justification is to be attributed to God and not to works done by men; all glory must be glory in God and not in self, a point which is emphasised by a series of such contrasts, (a device which he loves and frequently employs at great length). What St. Paul and St. James respectively have to say about works is carefully harmonised, (a standpoint which Stapulensis retains throughout his works), and the instrument for doing this now is the three-fold Dionisian framework of purgation, illumination and perfection, in this case slightly adapted. Works of the law purify, faith converts and justification illumines. Works are the purging of darkness, faith is the application, and justification illuminates the purified condition, rendering everything clear and serene. Stapulensis condemns those who exaggerate either position, that of faith only or of works only, as mistaken, and takes this as an example of the wrong sort of sect:

There are two sects, one following Paul and the other James; we should put our trust in neither for salvation, but only in God. This apparent discord arises from the flesh and not the Spirit. (Rom.4:29).

Bishops must be bold when "wolves", leaders of sects, arise; neither Paul nor Timothy can keep safe the gift entrusted to them by their own efforts; only he who entrusted it to them can do this. He indeed, Christ, can keep it safe not only while Timothy or Paul are exercising their episcopate, but even to the end of the world (2.Tim.1:4). Clearly Stapulensis, in 1512, was already interested in some of the controverted



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questions of the period, but when he does use the word heresy with a clear indication of the doctrines to which he is alluding the reference is always to Islam. He expresses extremely strong feelings on the subject of the Muslim domination of christian Europe and refers to this affliction of the Church on frequent occasions. While he expresses the belief that heathens in good faith will be saved although the christian believer will enjoy greater glory, he specifically excludes from this irenic picture the Tartars, whom he claims have heard and rejected the Gospel; so they are not in "good faith" and cannot be saved by the law of nature (Rom.2:15). He evidently considered the amalgam of Jewish and Christian writings with other material in the Koran to mean that the Muslim world had sufficient access to the Gospel. The strength of emotion he evinces on the subject would seem to imply some unpleasant personal experience, but there seems to be no record of such an experience.<sup>(28)</sup> Even when he is contrasting the strength and firmness of faith which characterised the Church at its beginning, and which he believes will be renewed at its end, with its contemporary lamentable state, the perverse dogmas that he stigmatises are again those of Islam:

In the middle times in which we live fervour has languished and devotion has dried up like straw... Moreover the Church is invaded by the attacks of the dragon...heresies and perverse dogmas. The dragon who prevails most of all is that first beast of the Apocalypse, together with that head of perdition, the Mahomedan sect. (Ps.101:24 Adv).

Apparently he saw Islam as posing a real doctrinal threat, for he not only remarked that "God had shortened the days of that pernicious poison, lest all should be killed" (Ps.101:24,Adv.) but also pointed out that

the divine name is here given in the plural, as also in psalm 41 and 42, because this psalm about sinful man also deals with his adhesion to the sect of the Mahomedans...who not only deny that Christ is God, but also obstinately deny any plurality in God, which is totally opposed to the whole content of this psalm (Ps.52,Concil).



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The "fables" which will be desired by "itching ears" are seen by Stapulensis as the "Arabian doctrine":

How great is the need for sound doctrine now in the face of that persecuting fire and sword which will not listen... it would not have spread the way it has if bishops had been watchful and done their duty. (2 Tim.4:22 & 4:A22).

Perhaps this vivid awareness of the Muslim threat makes Stapulensis' less urgent interest in some of the other controverted questions of the age a little more comprehensible.

The concept of the Church as the body of Christ is further illuminated by Stapulensis' contrasting it with the body of sin, conceived apparently in an equally corporeal way. Our post-baptismal life should be devoted to the contemplation of God since our final, or real, birth will be into the beatific vision: such a way of life is not really difficult because once we have been incorporated into the body of Christ the body of sin is headless, and so can be easily destroyed. To be under the law was to be still part of the body of Adam, the body of sin, and so in need of a doctor to cure us (Rom.6:45-48). While we lived in sins and offences Christ was not our head; our head was the prince of this world, the evil power of darkness who is the devil, the ancient serpent cast out of heaven; just as Christ operates for good in his faithful since the influence flows from the head into the members, so the devil works evil in the faithless, the obstinate, the rebellious, working carnal things in carnal men so that they walk in evil desires (Eph.2:5). Excommunication almost seems to be incorporation into this body of the prince of this world: Hymaenus and Alexander, and the incestuous man at Corinth, were like sheep separated from the flock and given to the wolf, for in that situation they were under the power of the wolf, immediately subject to Satan, the devil, and the ancient serpent (I Tim.1:7). Those excommunicated are permanently estranged from the body of Christ, their lot is with the demons where they are



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already open to their attacks, unless God's mercy draw them ~~to~~ repentance (I Cor.6:27).

Evidently this body of Christ has a visible, external structure which Stapulensis takes for granted as an essential part of the nature of the Church. The city of Sion, or the gates of Sion (Ps.9) are interpreted in terms of the Gospel: Thou art Peter, on this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her (Matt.16:18). The phrase Latera aquilonis, civitas regis magni refers to the fact that the highest princes of the Church, Peter and Paul, starting from Jerusalem established the Church chiefly towards the north (Ps.47:2,Adv). There is occasional discussion of the organisation of the Church:

The Vulgate says: Tantum digne evangelio Christi conversamini. It would be more intelligible and better Latin if it said: Pro dignitate; that word conversamini means a polity, a regime, the private administration of private affairs and the public administration of public affairs. (Philip. 1:D4).

Stapulensis' discussion of the authority of the Church in the matter of the confession and absolution of sin clearly presupposes an external structure, and sometimes the point is explicit: the Gospel phrase, if he will not listen to the Church let him be to you as the heathen and the publican, is used to warn and condemn the sinner who "is proud and contemptuous of the power of the priests", (Heb.10:50). The celestial hierarchy was the original model for the Church's structure, which is thus of divine origin:

These kings, princes and leaders of the hosts, ecclesiastical hosts inferior to those highest angelic ones, are by right called apostles. These associates and beloved friends and companions everywhere enjoyed a variety of sacred offices organised according to divine tradition. (Ps.67: 13,Adv).(29)

While upholding the authority and power of the earthly hierarchy Stapulensis does not lose sight of the source of this authority:

The Vulgate has: Dei enim sumus adiutores. It would be better to say co-operatores, for we help



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someone whose own power is not sufficient but who would say this about God? But nothing prevents us from cooperating with supreme power; to cooperate is to receive a share in that power, and in a sense, to imitate it. (I Cor.3:C12).

A steward is not required to glory in the dispensation of the gifts left to him, to be himself considered the head, the leader of the camp, the first to fire. The Lord is head and leader of all, both of the one dispensing and of the things dispensed. (I Cor.4:17).

Prelates should not think of themselves in the role of spouses of the Church, but only as vicars of the Spouse, for "indeed, neither Peter nor Paul were spouses, but only friends of the bridegroom" (I Tim.3:13). Though Stapulensis encourages his readers to pray that the Lord will send labourers into his harvest he warns them that no one may arrogate this ministry to himself (Rom.1:15).

The binding force of the Church's authority is expressed in Stapulensis' own version of the two-swords concept, which brings together the two-edged sword of Psalm 149, the two-edged sword of Hebrews 4, and the two swords of the Lucan passion narrative; Stapulensis' practice of interpreting one passage of scripture by another produces some curious combinations but also some interesting applied theology.

These sharp swords rending both to right and left are to be understood of pontifical and imperial jurisdiction, spiritual and temporal. Luke tells us this in a similitude.... These swords must be wielded against both rich and poor, powerful and weak; otherwise if only the poor, the weak and the unknown are corrected, while the rich, powerful and famous are left licence to sin and commit injustice, the swords are not being wielded on both sides. Indeed if kings and princes sin either in sacred matters or in the temporal domain, they first of all should be restrained by these swords according to the precept contained in the eighth verse: [ad alligandos reges eorum in compedibus, et nobiles eorum in manicis ferreis] so that the written divine law may be fulfilled for us. For the glory, perfection and honour of the present Church consists in the right use of these two swords. For truly this one, that is the secular sword, inflicts punishment on people, while the other merely gives reproaches.



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This one restrains kings and princes in fetters of iron, while the other uses the chains and fetters of anathema, and handing-over to the power of Satan, so that while they are deprived [?] of life / temporally, their souls may not perish eternally. (Ps.149:6,Adv).

A gentler presentation of the authoritative role of the hierarchy focusses on the episcope or oversight of a bishop over his flock, which implies the right and duty of visitation.<sup>(30)</sup> He must be the organiser, supervisor, observer, guardian and pastor of his flock, like a watchman guarding a city. It is a beautiful title, but the actual exercise of the office is even more beautiful than the name (I Tim.3:12 & 3:A12). A graded hierarchy in the Church is part of the divine will and plan, and Stapulensis returns to the subject of the demeanour appropriate to the various categories on more than one occasion. Timothy, himself a bishop, obeyed St. Paul "as his father, indeed, as Christ"; since the present hierarchy is an imitation of the heavenly prototype all obedience in the Church is referred to Christ as the head (I Cor.3:13 & Heb.12:88). Numerous examples of the legitimate exercise of such authority can be found in these works, especially in connection with the administration of the sacraments (I Cor.11:44; Col.2:9-10; Heb. 10:50).

Inevitably Stapulensis raises the question of the abuse of power more than once. In general he recommends an attitude of Christian patience combined with the sort of intelligent discernment that Christ himself recommended: "He who hears you hears me; it is true that the times are evil, so you must look not at their present lives but at their office; what they do ex officio they do well" (Heb.12:82). The existence of abuses did not lead Stapulensis to suggest that the Church should not have developed a hierarchical structure; on the contrary at times he suggests that a distortion of it is precisely one of the abuses to be deplored:

There is perversion and confusion of this order, seculars taking over the functions of sacred ministers while those consecrated to sacred offices



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are engaged in temporal affairs. The lesser criticises the greater and the inferior the superior in the organisation of spiritual life, a confusion of God's gift of order, which St. Paul describes as sevenfold, first prophecy, second ministry...No one should usurp the function for which he has not the gift. (Rom.12:106).

The catalogue is precisely applied to the contemporary Church: the first grade consists of those who have been given understanding to direct the future of the Church, second are deacons and ministers, third bishops and fourth preachers; the fifth grade consists of those who deal with paying the bills, the sixth of princes and the seventh of those who do works of mercy, all by God's grace (Rom.12:107). Clearly several of these functions may be combined in one office, and a comment on the duty of preaching includes another of Stapulensis' characteristic platonic touches:

Teach and preach this: What he commands Timothy is addressed to all, but especially those who are set over others, for to teach and preach is the role of superiors towards their inferiors; it is not the lower which illuminates the higher, but the higher sends out its rays of illumination to the lower, in this way making the lower, by reception of these rays (if you like to take it this way) summiformia. By thus following the example of the higher levels the lower must do what they can by imitation to become maioriformes in speech, in manner of life, in love, in spiritual works, in faith, in chastity. These things should shine out from the higher to the lower just as everything beneath the sun seems to be luminous and is luciformia. (I Tim.4:20).(31)

Though he has remarked that the celebration of the sacred mysteries is the role of the pontiff, Stapulensis is envisaging the church of his own day when he associates this with the priest, and discusses the term "presbyter" at some length. The word originally means "senior", but is used not of age but of order, for "he is thus senior in mind and spiritual prudence even if he has not yet attained twenty-five years, for by means of the sacred action of his superiors he is already perfected and called presbyter, or senior, since this order is not one



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of initiation but of consummation". It should not however be conferred on one who is not "grey-haired in mind even if not in body" since the mystery which he transacts is more august than all others, the mystery of the Eucharist. "As in earthly affairs those who hold absolute and supreme power are kings, so these, holding supreme and absolute divine power, are sacred kings" (I Tim.4:21). Purity and reverence should also characterise the life of the deacons who take in their own hands the "superheavenly and supersubstantial bread"; just as it is no mean honour for them to minister at the table of the Lord, so too it is their privilege to feed the holy people of God by reading the Gospel at Mass (I Tim.3:13)<sup>(32)</sup>

The need for reform in the life and manners of the clergy is a recurrent theme, and Stapulensis reserves most of his opprobrium for the bishops, though he does advert to their obligation to correct others.<sup>(33)</sup> Since bishops will have to answer at God's tribunal they should be vigilant to suppress all forms of magic and superstitious practice, and repress the avarice of relic-hawkers. There is a suggested emendation of the phrase: Induti sunt arietes ovium; aptius: induentur, ex Hebraeo, which leads Stapulensis into a long lament about the state of the church where it seems that many prelates are wolves in sheep's clothing:

O! Would that Jesus Christ the eternal shepherd would bring it about that in our time all the pastors, primates, bishops, abbots, prelates and simple priests of his Church, changed into lambs, would so clothe and adorn the flocks committed to them that all... replete with heavenly nourishment, might be filled with the praise of Christ. (Ps.64:14,Adv).

Prelates who live one way and teach another are rightly despised (Tit.2:11). Bishops should preach out of an adequate knowledge of the faith and their private life should accord with their preaching; they should not be involved in worldly concerns, nor engage in useless and contentious discussions and disputes (2 Tim.2:8-9). Stapulensis has further harsh things to say about their luxury, extravagant clothes, and their use of physical



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violence (2 Tim.2:17).<sup>(34)</sup> A bishop should be the husband of one wife; Stapulensis laments that canon law does not similarly exclude fornicators; he explains the single marriage requirement as the symbol of the single union between Christ and his Church, an image which should not be violated by those who are prelates in the church:

But if an entirely chaste marriage violates this symbolic union, what is to be said of those who violate it by fornication, not just twice, but, sad to say, a hundred times?... If we had canons formulated according to the spirit these would be excluded; I will refrain from saying whether the canons we have are formulated according to the flesh (I Tim. 3:12-13).<sup>(35)</sup>

How can a morally unworthy bishop be a good watchman? Stapulensis applies the passage concerning those who build on the foundation laid by Christ with gold, silver, metal, wood or stone to the historical process of teaching in the Church. The gold, silver and precious stones are holy and uncontaminated doctrine; those who teach impious dogma and poisonous seduction are the builders in wood, hay and straw. What is built up is the ordinary people who are presented either with an incorrupt doctrine or the virus of a pestiferous dogma; both those who build well and those who are well built up will be saved, while the evil builders and those built up evilly will be damned together (I Cor.3:13). How are folk to distinguish the evil teaching from the good?

From the analogy of the Old Testament we can see whether good or bad shepherds or builders have been placed in the Church. Let no one presume to decide, let no one judge them; their works will show them up. The judgement of those who are good is more difficult, but the evil are condemned by their works, especially when these are manifest and open. (I Cor. 4:22).



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Since Stapulensis was far from blind to the corruption of the hierarchy in the Church of his day it is remarkable that he has so little to say about the papacy, with which he must have gained some acquaintance during his various journeys to Rome. Perhaps his view of it was in general the same as his view of bishops - its authority was to be upheld while its abuses were to be deplored.<sup>(36)</sup> There seems to be no direct reference to the contemporary papacy in the works under consideration; such allusions as there are are either to the historical Peter or merely to the institution in a very general sense. A subtle distinction is made between the Church founded on Peter and the church of Rome when Stapulensis wishes to point out that the Petrine function is that of cementing unity:

Peter went first to Antioch, and then to Rome.... He placed the Church on the rock (Petra) which is Christ the Lord. What then? Shall we not call it the Roman Church? Yes to be sure, but it shows greater honour to call it the Church of the rock. To Peter it was said: Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church; it was not said '... upon Rome...'. For Rome will be saved as long as the shipmaster Peter, governor of the ship and the keys, adheres to the rock. I would joyfully submit to death for the Church of the rock which takes its name from that foundation and corner-stone, for to die thus is to find life. Thus the everlasting Spouse calls to his bride in the loving drama of the Canticle: Come my dove in the clefts of the rock, in the niches of the wall... But if anyone proclaims to me the church of Antioch, of Alexandria, of Romulus or Remus, because he thereby obscures, hides and conceals the name of my Lord and my God, I do not recognise it as that of the Great King. If he speaks of the Church of the Rock (Petra), or of Christ, I recognise it instantly. Indeed he who proclaims the Church of Peter proclaims a name inferior to that of him who proclaims the Church of the Rock (Petra). For it is not Peter's unless he is a faithful procurator, dispenser and vicar, but it is the Rock's, who is indeed its own paterfamilias, its own king. If Peter himself is questioned as to the name, he will proclaim that that, and no other, is the real name; I have him as a witness in heaven. The true name unites all things but anyone who talks about the church of Antioch or the church of Alexandria brings about division. The union of all gives birth to charity, but division breeds seditions. And I know, from this passage (i.e. of the psalm) that city of our God, the holy mountain... will never cease to exist. God has founded her for ever. And I further know that He is our God for ever and always, that He will



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rule us for ever. This is indeed most true: I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith may not fail. And I am with you always, even to the consummation of the world. (Ps. 47:2, Adv.).

This rejection of any merely localised church, and the willingness to die only for a church which is truly universal, harmonises with Stapulensis' horror of schism and division, but he does seem to envisage the possibility (perhaps more than that) that "Peter the ship-master" could be divorced from Christ, and would then forfeit any claim to function as the Church's centre of unity. It is not clear however whether he foresees the Church of Christ surviving despite the defection of Peter's successor, or whether he believes that bad as the papacy may be or may become, its total defection, the total separation of Peter from Christ, will not actually happen. The psalmist's prayer: Do not cast me off in my old age, refers to Christ's body the Church; he prays that it may not be entirely rejected in the last days, that the strength of devotion may not entirely fail and that faith may not perish utterly, which doubtless would happen "if Christ had not prayed for her (and he is always heard for his reverence and majesty), as we read in Luke: And I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith may not fail" (Ps. 70:2, Adv).<sup>(37)</sup> In connection with the dispute at Antioch Stapulensis rejects the suggestion that the Cephas corrected by St. Paul was some other disciple, and insists that Peter was not ignorant but merely cowardly in his behaviour; he had to be corrected not so much for his own sake as for that of others since the sin was one of dissimulation. His fear of scandal was in itself good, but Paul was right to look after the interests of his Gentile converts, so God allowed Peter to fall for a while so that this fall might be followed by a much greater rising and a greater good. Perhaps this implies that Stapulensis considered the papacy as neither immune from sin, nor exempt from criticism and correction (Gal. 2:7-9 & 2:19).<sup>(38)</sup>



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#### III. HOW MEN BECOME MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

The twofold nature of the body of Christ is again apparent from the various ways in which the faithful actually become members of it. This "deifying body" may be a mystical one, but it is clearly by means of Christ's physical body that it is possible for men to be inserted into it. The verb "to insert" is that most commonly used by Stapulensis, <sup>(39)</sup> with occasional striking developments of the theme; man's relationship with the Trinity can be seen as threefold:

The first is memory, the second is will and the third is a blessed understanding; by the first we are inserted into the eternal Father, by the second into the Holy Spirit, and by the third we are inserted into the true Son, Word and Wisdom of God. By these three we are inserted into the unity of the one God, and separately into each of them. (2 Thess. 1:3). <sup>(40)</sup>

Stapulensis evidently has a very high idea of what man's insertion into the body of Christ achieves: Christ's unshakeable kingdom is received by those who insert themselves by his faith and by worship of him, or more correctly, are inserted by God (Heb.12:77). Other verbs used are "to be united with", "to communicate with God", "to collect under one head", "to confirm and connect in one body" (I Cor.1:B2 & 10:69, Eph.1:2 & 2:6), and the bodily aspect of this union of the faithful with Christ is underlined by Stapulensis' adoption of St. Paul's own terms such as incorporate and concorporate. The prefix co- recurs frequently in the Epistle Commentary, in such expressions as co-aedificatio and co-haeresis, and seems intended to emphasise the reality of the partnership between the members and the head, the faithful and Christ, (Eph.2:6 & 3:9). This partnership is examined a little more fully at times; Stapulensis would prefer to replace the Vulgate word societatem with communione since

communio indicates a community or sharing among those who are not equal, and who would call himself the associate or equal of the Son of God? But there



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is nothing to prevent us talking about a communication or a participation of his goodness, or of being co-united with his body. (I Cor.1:B2).

Yet Stapulensis can also say: "Let us not rejoice because we are sons of Abraham, but more particularly because we share the name and substance of Christ" (Gal. 3:17) and: "He makes us, his members, corporeally sharers of his divine plenitude" (Col.2:7).

For Stapulensis the outward aspect of the body of Christ is the visible, institutional Church. He appreciates the sacramental mode by which salvation is actually offered to man and has an acute grasp of the sacraments as effective signs which bring about what they signify. Insertion into the body of Christ is achieved, and only achieved, by the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, and these two sacraments receive extensive treatment which, while in no way original, does contribute to his picture of the Church as the body of Christ. General references to baptismal washing abound, as well as explicit statements: "When we have been initiated by sacred rites he immediately inserts us into his sacred body". (Heb.6:A22). Baptism is the true circumcision of the whole body by the Rock which is Christ (Philip.2:9). The regeneration brought about by baptism is constantly alluded to, and it can be seen that

the Blessed Apostle is implying in all his greetings that the salvation of the Churches lies in the recognition of the superdivine Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in whom they are created and recreated, born and reborn. (2 Thess. 1:1).

Stapulensis' full exposition of the ceremony and symbolism of baptism brings together many of his characteristic themes:

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. This precious death is brought about for us under sacred veils by holy baptism, when we are transferred from the body of sin to that of justice, from Adam to Christ. This cannot be done unless we die to sin and live to justice. This death is brought about in us by the ablution of washing, which designates the most precious blood of Christ. By the cross with which we are signed



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the cross of Christ is represented, as though we co-died, and were con-crucified with Christ in mystery. We are immersed three times which signifies Christ's three days in the sepulchre; in mystery we are co-buried with Christ. Finally we emerge altogether and this emergence is the sign of Christ's, and our, new resurrection, as though we had already risen with Christ in his footsteps. In the end we shall truly rise to the true resurrection. (Rom.6:45).

Stapulensis agrees that the child born of at least one christian parent is holy (unlike the child of two pagans who is unclean), but such holiness is derivative and inchoate; only if it is consummated by baptism will it become holiness drawn from the immediate fount of holiness, holiness such as that to which heaven is opened. If a child dies in the womb so that baptism is impossible "God will excuse him", but if baptism is lacking through neglect "God will accuse him". (I Cor. 6:44), whereas one who dies immediately after baptism will go straight to heaven (Rom.3:27). The efficacy of the baptismal rite is explained by allusion to Christ's own baptism (Ps.37,Tit). At times the sacrament of penance is associated with baptism: anyone who has been sanctified and justified by the mystery of Christ either by baptism, or after baptism by the sacrament of reconciliation, should not lack confidence (I Cor.6:34) and the relationship of such rites of the Church to the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ is clearly understood:

Under the old law they had victims to offer as often as they sinned as a legal expiation for sin, but we have not been left another victim to offer if, after the remission of sin by washing, we voluntarily fall back into vice. Our victim was offered once and now remains for ever, never again to be immolated although the memorial of that immolation is frequently carried out. What then? Must the sinner despair of pardon? By no means, but faults are now remitted by other means than the offering of victims. The manner of purgation is now through reconciliation and confession. As the Lord said: There is more joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance. (Heb.10:50).

For Stapulensis the celebration of the Eucharist was the focus of the Church's sacramental life and he seems to touch on almost every aspect of its doctrine and



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practice. His presentation is orthodox according to the later Tridentine criterion, but he indicates some awareness of current exaggerations and abuses, as well as of deviant teachings about the mode of Christ's presence in the sacrament. Almost every reference to food and drink in the psalms is seen as a reference to the Eucharist, even when this involves some emendation of the text:

...From the fruit of the corn, wine and oil; the particle 'and oil' is superfluous and does not appear in the Hebrew; it was added by those who wished to avoid a sacramental interpretation.... Jerome says that it was not present in Origen's Hexapla. (Ps.4:8, Adv.)

His basic concept of the Eucharist is that of the one oblation which was the price of our redemption; the term reminiscentur is glossed as: "carry out the memorial of my passion as a sacrifice of praise" (Ps.21, Tit.), and the same understanding appears elsewhere (Ps.4, 22, I Cor. 11 & Heb.5).<sup>(41)</sup> Christ's one sacrifice was all-sufficient, for "if it were offered more than once the first time could not really have been wholly universal and entirely sufficient" (Heb.10:47), and is the one offering acceptable to God: "The mystery contains nothing else than the memorial of his divine and all salvific oblation... and this is more acceptable to God than all other sacrifices and oblations" (Heb.7:35).<sup>(42)</sup> The sacrament was instituted as a sign and memorial of the Passion of Christ until the end of time, and each of these points receives frequent and explicit treatment; they are also summed up more briefly in places: "Concerning the wonderful institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist as a marvellous memorial of what Christ the Lord did for us" (Ps.110, Concil). Stapulensis seems to emphasise the sign value and character of the Eucharist in the context of a lament about the way the generosity of the simple is evoked by the precious metal composing a collecting box:

Yet in many places...the body of Christ himself, the Saint of saints, lies quite without honour as though he whom we now see in a visible sacrament still has nowhere to lay his head. (Tit.1:3).<sup>(43)</sup>



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The Eucharist is a memorial of Calvary: "the priestly offering of the oblation is a memorial (as it is called) of that all-salutary and all-saving immolation of Christ on the cross, and a thanksgiving for it" (Heb. 10:50), and it is permanent: "the body of the Lord and his vivifying blood left to us as a most holy memorial until the consummation of the world" (Ps. 73:4, Ex. Cont.). What Christ did on earth he continues to do in heaven:

The priest who is instituted by God offers a divine and spiritual sacrifice; nor is there one offering made on earth and a separate one in heaven, but what is still hidden by sacred veils on earth is truly revealed in heaven. Therefore in the new priesthood of the eternal priest it is no longer necessary to offer sacrifice by making use of examples and shadows of heavenly things, as was the case under the Old Law; the very reality of the new things is used, though in a veiled way while we are still living this mortal life. (Heb. 8:37).

Stapulensis clearly asserts the need for faith in the reality of Christ's presence in the Eucharist but does not enter into any detailed discussion of the mode of that presence: Christ will manifest the virtue and efficacy of the offering of his body and blood to the faithful Church which believes in him (Ps. 110:4-6, Ex. Cont.). Faith is required in the recipient so that "he may judge rightly who and what it is he is receiving" (I Cor. 11:23).<sup>(44)</sup> The Eucharist is the true heavenly manna, and the true vine, a theme Stapulensis quotes from two well-known Eucharistic hymns which occur in the liturgy for the feast of Corpus Christi (Ps. 22, Tit. & Ps. 131:16, Adv.) and to which he frequently returns (Ps. 64:10, Ex. Cont., I Tim. 3:13, 6, Heb. 6:26). In the Eucharist we have not a shadow, but the truth Himself in reality (Ps. 110:7, Ex. Cont.). The faithful should remember the "ineffable sweetness of Christ when he gives us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink" (Ps. 80:3, Adv.) and the fact that the sacrament is primarily intended for eating is emphasised by the use of such terms as viaticum, (Ps. 25, & 64) and a linguistic argument which turns on the translation of the Greek



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word βρῶσιν as ciboria, (Ps.131:16, Adv.) "The poor live by eating this sacrifice of praise...they eat my flesh, the victim and sacrifice of praise, and adore by eating" (Ps.21, Tit.) Stapulensis brings a number of these themes together in one passage of comment:

Lift up your hands at night to the Lord... An ancient rite of the Church ordained that priests should raise their hands to the Lord (not at night but at dawn); that is, they should lift them up to the sacrament of his body and blood, which is the Holy of Holies. Where our text has sancta the Hebrew has sanctum; doubtless we should understand this to refer to Christ the Lord, who is the Holy One of the Lord and who remains in Sion in that sacrament, which is called, and which alone is, the Holy of Holies. To this alone all the servants of the Lord and all the ministers of sacred things are ordered to lift up their hands and to direct all the affection of their hearts. Indeed, if we say in sancta this implies the twofold species of that most holy sacrifice, for we are commanded to lift up our hands...to the host (hostia) of the Lord's body and equally to the blood and chalice of benediction of the Lord. These holy things are to be adored with all the worship of veneration which does not belong to anything else except the super-immense and supertremendous hypostasis of the divine Word. (Ps.133:3, Adv.).

The Eucharist is the supreme means for achieving union with God:

We are made members of the body of Christ through the grace and through the flesh of him to whom our flesh is united. Then sin, that weakness of the flesh, is put to death in our flesh. But you will say: How is our flesh united to his flesh? Indeed as often as we receive his most holy body, his flesh is united to our flesh, and his Spirit is united to our spirit, in order that we may be one body and one spirit with him, and walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. (Rom.8:63).

The consummation of prayer and of all divine favours (indultus) is union with God; let that union with and in God be made by the reception of the body and blood of Christ in a spiritual manner. (I Cor.11:77).

That spiritual reception here refers to the dispositions with which communion should be received seems to be evident from the next sentence:



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one should approach that all-consummating participation in the divine body and blood with the greatest reverence, purity and holiness.

Such union with God of course also establishes union among those who receive communion for "all by Holy Communion are united to the body of Christ, to one and the same thing" (I Cor.11:86), and the Eucharist is also seen as the means of extending the Church:

by your sanctification you have prepared for them bread, a heavenly viaticum, because this is the way in which the preparation and renovation of the whole world has been ordained.(Ps.64:10,Ex.Cont.).

So the Argument of Psalm 4 is: The illumination of the Gentiles, and the increase of the Church from communion in the most holy offering of the Eucharistic bread and wine (Ps.4,Concil). Indeed the Lord gives his body as food even to the Gentiles who snarl at him (Ps.146, Concil.), and this aspect of the Eucharist leads Stapulensis' thoughts on to the subject of the communion of saints:

The blessing cup which we bless, is it not a communication in the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of the Lord? Where the old translation here uses two words, communicatio and participatio, Paul has the same word κοινωνία which the holy fathers translated as communion, and this is what they call the communion of saints. If anyone did not know this before let him at least learn it now from this passage in St. Paul, (I Cor. 10:D68).

Inevitably the two sacraments most frequently mentioned are those of baptism and the Eucharist, but the sacrament of reconciliation and penance has already been referred to as an alternative method of sanctification and justification. The earthly absolution is a sign of that pronounced in heaven and Christ's intentions in this matter have been correctly understood and interpreted by the Church, according to Stapulensis (Heb.10:50).<sup>(45)</sup> He seems moreover to be recommending the practice of receiving the sacrament of penance before going to Holy Communion when he says that the



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recipient must be "purged and illuminated" before approaching, otherwise he "aggravates the wound of sin and perverts the order of sanctification". Confirmation and the sacrament of the anointing of the sick do not receive explicit treatment in these works, though there may be oblique references to the former: it is the role of the presbyter to lay hands on those who are to be initiated, purified or made perfect; since the context here makes it clear that the first and third stages are seen as baptism and ordination, it is possible that the second might refer to confirmation, though the sacrament of reconciliation seems more likely (I Tim.4:21). However "we are cleansed and washed in that blood and water of which our baptismal washing is the mystery and symbol....and being washed we are further chrismated, that is, adorned with the gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Tit.3:12). The sacramental status of matrimony and ordination in Stapulensis' mind may be inferred from his remarks about them in connection with the office of bishop and priest, but he was clearly much more interested in their ecclesiological relevance than in their individual or personal effects.

While Stapulensis took it for granted that the benefits of salvation were normally conveyed to the believer through the Church's sacramental system, he makes it clear that the sacraments provide no automatic guarantee:

Someone will say: we have received the Holy Spirit, we have been baptised in Christ, we have partaken of the body and blood of Christ, therefore we are made partakers of the Gospel, therefore we shall receive an incorruptible crown. It will by no means happen like that!... If we fall into the evils of concupiscence of taste, of avarice (and the like...) and indulge in similar unlawful wickedness, even though all these sacred mysteries have been performed about us, we shall not receive that crown and shall by no means enter the kingdom of God, just as some of the Children of Israel did not enter the promised land. (I Cor.10:66).

Preparation for the sacraments is frequently inculcated, and all should approach in a disposition which will



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maintain and encourage unity and charity (I Cor.11:83). Such preparation is the fruit of cooperation between God and man:

Let him who receives the body of Christ prove, search and examine himself, equipping himself with justice as far as he is able; but let him look to God for this equipment and not to his own strength, nor attribute it to his own capability...May Christ our King, the author of this mystery, himself grant us grace thus to prepare to receive him. (I Cor. 11:84).(46)

Perseverance in the christian life is also necessary: "We are one body and one spirit in Christ...Let us never dissolve this holy union by some unfortunate carnal work" (I Cor.6:36), and on one occasion Stapulensis lists fifteen precise and detailed precepts about how the christian life is to be lived, which extend well beyond the traditional physical and spiritual works of mercy, and tells his readers that to fail in this way of life is to disrupt the body of Christ and to show that one is not a child of the Church (I Thess.5:23). So we must

lift up the drooping hands and strengthen the weak knees, so that God in his mercy may heal and bring salvation to what is crippled by our sinfulness, rather than cast it into Gehenna. Our hands are drooping when they are not exercised in good works; our knees are weak when we are not moved to good works by faith and piety. We make a straight path for our feet when we walk in the precepts of faith. (Heb.12:74).

The effects of sin may be mortal and cut men off from the body of Christ altogether, as has already been seen, even when the appearances are to the contrary: "Some, although they still adhere, are disjoined from the head and are dead members, just as members of the human body are when no vital force flows into them" (Col.2:8). Stapulensis broaches the problem of how there can be sin in the body of Christ, and pursues the distinction between the head and the members in this respect at some length: "How can the Son of God sin?...In Himself it is impossible, but it is possible in his members".



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The member of the Church who is incorporated into Christ has no need of repentance unless he is overtaken by error or evil; then when he repents Christ retrieves him from the power of the Evil One and reduces to mockery and spectacle the powers of darkness. Since it is extremely difficult for the person inserted into Christ to sin, the exultation of the Devil is all the greater in that he has gained a victory not merely over a human being, but over Christ. On the other hand there is joy before the angels of God when the repentant sinner comes back and the devil is deprived of his spoils (Heb.6:A22). Movement either way is evidently possible in Stapulensis' view.

#### IV. WHAT IS THE SALVATION EFFECTED BY THE CHURCH ?

The salvation made available in the Church is primarily a spiritual union with God:

Those who would otherwise die because of all their sins are made alive with Christ, made alive by the Spirit; but they cannot be vivified by the Spirit unless they first, or at least at the same time, die to the flesh and to sin, for it is the nature of all flesh first to die to sin and then to be vivified by the Spirit and live to justice .....If we do not adhere to the body we do not live by the Spirit. (Eph.2:5-6).

The closeness of this union is frequently emphasised: "This new creature is crucified and raised with Christ by a mystery of union superior to the world and the flesh" (Gal.6:34). "God himself, his will, his energy, his action and operation are at work in spiritual men" (Philip.2:6) and the result of this union is the justification and sanctification of man. For Stapulensis there is not yet a consistent difference between these two terms, for the justified member of the Church enjoys eternal life here and now: "Son of man, understand this mystery - that you are living eternal life here on this earth". Death does not really interrupt the life that Christ gives, and is in fact a benefit since



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it is the manifestation of this full and real life (I Thess.5:21). Because Christ is consubstantial with God and with us, God has poured his own Spirit into our hearts, "giving confidence to our timidity and instructing us to call him Father, which even the angels dare not do" (Gal.4:18). Every believer is loved "not only because he is a creature and image of God, but also because through regeneration he is made a son of God" (I Cor.13:92). As such the members of the Church are co-heirs with Christ of the kingdom of heaven: "We are led out of captivity by Christ and transferred from his left hand to sit at his right" (Eph.4:12), so that we sit at the right hand of the Father "the symbol of future glory and of the riches of the Father's grace" (Eph.2:5).

Stapulensis' own most individual and striking expression of salvation is his notion of "Christiformity". The word seems to have been coined by the Pseudo-Dionisius to express his particular crystallisation of the concept of θεωωσις or deification,<sup>(47)</sup> found among the Greek fathers such as Irenaeus, Origen and Athanasius.<sup>(48)</sup> In the Latin West the notion appears in the works of St. Augustine in similar but not identical terminology.<sup>(49)</sup> Though the word occasionally cropped up in later Greek writers<sup>(50)</sup> the source from which Stapulensis derived it was undoubtedly the writings of Pseudo-Dionisius coupled with those of Nicolas of Cusa.<sup>(51)</sup> In Cusa's work the word appears to mean assimilation to Christ by way of imitation,<sup>(52)</sup> but Stapulensis took the idea much further than this in a neoplatonic sense. Though much influenced by Pseudo-Dionisius he seems to have made the platonic idea of form thoroughly his own, since his works contain numerous formulations using the particles: - forma, -formis and -formitas.<sup>(53)</sup> In the present works the notion of christiformity refers both to a state and to a process which leads to that state or condition, and the whole concept is summed up in a manner reminiscent at times of Cusa's work:



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Whoever comes to him dies in his death and rises again in his resurrection; they will not rise again unless they have previously died. They are thus made christiform that they may be suitable for his body, for the members of the whole body must be in conformity with the head, otherwise it is a monster. In other things such conformity is called ratio or proportion; in the body of Christ it is called christiformity. (Col.3:11).

Thus the state of christiformity refers to the ultimate glorification of the christian: "Only the bodies of those who are christiform at the resurrection will be changed, glorified and renewed" (Ps.29:Adv.circa titulum) and such glorification is a participation in that of Christ himself:

The just shall flourish like the palm-tree... this applies to Christ the Lord because of the pre-eminent excellence of his glorification; it applies to the rest of the just in accordance with their degree of christiformity. (Ps.91:12,Adv.).

Such glorified members of Christ's body share in some way in God's own mode of activity: "The inhabitants of heaven gaze with admiration only at you, Lord; they pursue their functions unceasingly and divinely"; great tranquillity comes to birth in the soul as a result of this "spiritiform praise" (Ps.118:12th.ogdoad and 21st ogdoad).

An indication of the process of becoming christiform occurs in the very opening of Stapulensis' first scriptural work, in comment on Psalm 1, perhaps an indication of the importance of the notion in his mind:

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy: this indicates passivity rather than activity in the divine conditions of the future, for just as iron is made igniform by passivity, so it seems that in the heavenly places they will be made deiform by receiving God. Notice how the divine and the human rather than being opposed, correspond by analogy and thus do not contradict each other. What in us here on earth is the highest activity is there the highest passivity, and this outweighs the former in excellence to the extent that the divine outweighs the human. (Ps.1:1,Adv.)



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Other references suggest that Stapulensis understands "receiving" in this passage somewhat in the platonic sense of an inferior example<sup>(54)</sup> receiving its form from a superior archetype:

Paul places his salvation in the grace of Christ by which he believes that he is conformed to him, and so, imitating him, he puts himself forward as a type (typus) to be imitated by others, of which the original target (scopus) and reality is Christ .... Thus even according to the weakness of the flesh you will be conformed to Christ, and you will assist the interior process of christiformity in the spirit, following not human doctrines but that exemplar which is in heaven. (Col.3:13-14).

Accepting St. Paul's own statement about his imitation of Christ, Stapulensis frequently refers to him as the christiform Paul (Ps.67:19, Adv., Gal.5:27, Philip.2:6). Paul presses on in order that he may be comprehended by the reality, archetype and exemplar, and leave the similitudes, types and vestiges behind. Enquiring what these similitudes are Stapulensis embarks on a complex, three-stage eschatology in which the figures of the Old Law were types of the realities of the new covenant, and even these mysteries of Christ are still types for us, of the heavenly realities, while we are yet in this mortal life. So Paul presses on towards that target which is the standard and defined measure of the soul (signum metanque praefinitam), Christ himself (Philip.2:9-10). We have seen how Stapulensis saw the function of preaching as a way in which the lower grades in the Church might be made "summiform" and endeavour to render themselves "maioriform" (I Tim.4:20) but he makes a careful distinction between the divine and the human roles in this process. He encourages the practice of exterior penance and mortification, provided the christian fixes his attention on Christ and not on himself when carrying out these practices: "Your tears and sackcloth are worth nothing: it is the tears and sackcloth of Christ that avail; nevertheless such practices are not useless in moderation and with discretion, for by them you are



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outwardly conformed to Christ".(Col.3:13). God dwells in those who study to conform themselves to Christ as he was while he lived in this world; glory in this world is to be assimilated to Christ as he was then, just as glory in the next world will be to be assimilated to the glorified Christ. "Is it not glorious thus to be christiform?" (Rom.8:71).

Keeping God's law also contributes to the process of christiformity, not because Stapulensis is advocating a legalism which he elsewhere deprecates, but because he sees that law in a platonic sense as the measure and reality of everything else:

Teach me your justifications..... As your infinite and unthinkable Word and your immense and ineffable utterance are the measure (ratio) of how your justifications are to be known, so when they are known there is always more left to be known more perfectly, for they are, as it were, the knowable form of the infinite archetype. (Ps.118: 16th. ogdoad).(55)

This concept of form is carried through to practical application in a number of passages:

Iniquity, stripping and despoiling the wicked of divine justice, renders them deformed and dark... for iniquity is not a form but a lack of form (informitas), but...your law is equity; not only is it form, but it is a certain divine form (diviniformitas). (Ps.118:15th. ogdoad).

Refrain from all appearance of evil. Evil seems to us to exist, but it is really an absence of form (informitas); therefore the command is that we should abstain from all absence of form, and it forbids all sin. Indeed if anything does appear to be there then it is not evil; but a suspicion of evil could be caused, and we must abstain even from this so as not to scandalise others. (I Thess. 5:15).(56)

Prayerful meditation on the scriptures is a further way of cultivating christiformity: "We should meditate a certain christiform imitation and seek a certain consolation of spirit, not praying with vain or idle curiosity" (QP.Epilogue). Those who read the scriptures illumined by faith in Christ receive therefrom his glory, his



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light and his spirit and are made christiform by that same image (2 Cor.3:16). As in baptism "we rise with Christ that, being thus made christiform, we may run with him to the final resurrection" (Philip.2:9), so christiformity is associated with the motherhood of the Church:

For we are children of the same father, God, and the same mother, the Church, brothers....by that birth which is from God... O wonderful fraternity! O christiformity beyond all price! We are all sons of this virgin mother just as Christ was son of the virginal and inviolate womb. (I Thess.4:16).

It would seem that Stapulensis conceived salvation as a very real transformation into Christ, and since Christ is a hypostatic union of human and divine natures this is indeed deification. The operative factor is the grace of Christ flowing from the head, conceived here as the platonic form, and this grace is transmitted from the form to the exemple in a platonic mode through a graduated hierarchy. The exemplum, the human soul, prepares for and cooperates with this influx by the use of the sacraments of the Church and the normal ecclesiastical and moral laws. Following Pseudo-Dionisius Stapulensis has integrated the whole external structure of the Church into a platonic hierarchical pattern.<sup>(57)</sup>

### V. THE REFORMING ELEMENTS IN STAPULENSIS' TEACHING

While Stapulensis certainly touches on some of the controverted topics that were to become for other reformers the cause of a breach with the church of Rome, his own characteristic theme as a reformer is his emphasis on the need for "saving doctrine". By this he seems to mean preaching based directly on the pious and meditative study of the scriptures rather than on the complexities of scholastic theology (QP. preface). Thus the reason for the composition of these first two scriptural works is entirely in harmony with the reforming activity which occupied his later life.



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This need for "saving doctrine" is illustrated by the prowling dogs of Psalm 58 who are seen as christians starved of such doctrine; hungering for doctrine like dogs for food they will wander round the various assemblies of the faithful in order to be fed, and will not be silent until they are content (Ps. 58:7 & 58:17, Ex.Cont.). Stapulensis asks why God seems to have rejected his people, why his anger burns hot against "the people of evangelical doctrine", and begs Him to be mindful of the faith of the primitive Church when he first acquired his people with "the implanting of the Gospel-law". Such laments however do not refer to the sort of activities that were later persecuted in the diocese of Meaux and elsewhere, for these remarks occur in the context of a tirade against "that bestial sect of the Mohammedans" and "evangelical doctrine" is being contrasted with the Koran! (Ps.73.Tit. & 73:1-3, Adv.). For Stapulensis at this stage evangelical doctrine evidently simply means the christian Gospel, and he is merely lamenting the absence of adequate preaching and teaching of the basic christian faith. Restoration of this would not constitute a particularly radical reform programme and he is looking forward to the time when the Lord will "irrigate his Church with fecund showers of doctrine" (Ps. 146,Concil.). It seems that the one major change that he would like to see, (and which was partially implemented later in Meaux) is the use of the vernacular; he does regret that folk now have to pray in a language that the vast majority of them do not understand (I Cor. 14:101).

What should be the content of such evangelical teaching is not made fully explicit but a number of remarks imply that Stapulensis contrasts simple exposition of the scriptures with the more subtle refinements of scholastic teaching. He tells his readers that "the word or promise of the Old Testament is consummated in justice; this consummated word is the Gospel and the law of the Spirit" (Rom.9:85), and animadverts sharply on those who "sow the



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poison of pestilential doctrine and adulterate the understanding of Holy Scripture" (Ps.139,Concil.). "Sound doctrine" or "true doctrine" is seen as the "holy, uncontaminated doctrine of the apostles" but precise examples of the sort of material alluded to are rare (I Cor.3:13). Quoting St. Augustine he does point out that

he who defends merit is looking towards man, while he who defends grace is looking towards God.... To dispute about grace in the manner in which St. Paul does, is theological; to dispute about the merit of works is human, or rather, as the Blessed Augustine says, 'it is proud: 'the defence of merits' he says 'belongs to the proud'. (I Cor. 8:57).

Stapulensis however does not reject all human apparatus in the field of theological study: real knowledge of scripture comes from the divine light received from above, and "we should listen to those who have had the firm tradition handed on to them from their predecessors, but when this is firmly established it is not absurd to use the instruments of the liberal arts in the study of scripture" (Rom.16:135). At this stage also he protests the entire submission of his judgement to "the holy Church of Christ, the uncontaminated mother of all believers", and asserts that he will always acquiesce in her judgements (QP.prologue, 2nd edn. 1513).<sup>(58)</sup>

Stapulensis' own concept of salvation has already been discussed, but it is possible to examine a little more fully his use of the term "justification" which was to be a source of controversy for others. He distinguishes legal justification, given by the law, from eternal life, though it is a preparation for this (Rom. 3:25-28). Justice is faith and the keeping of the divine commands; injustice is either unbelief or the breaking of the divine commands:

Philosophers define justice as the rendering to everyone of his due, and develop this in terms of distributive and commutative justice...but this is too narrow a concept of the matter, moving on merely a natural and not a divine plane. Human justice is indeed a vestige or reflection of



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divine justice which contains this within itself, so that if anyone violates divine justice he also offends against human justice, but the maintenance of human justice does not necessarily ensure that one will thereby have divine justice. (Ps.1:7, Adv.).

So we hope for salvation from God the saviour of all men, but chiefly the saviour of those who believe, for these he saves in this world by his providence, and in the next by glory and life eternal. Unbelievers on the other hand are saved only in this world; in the next he deprives them through justice of glory and eternal life, as is only right (I Tim.4:18,3). Since eternal life comes from God's mercy and not from the works of the law, the justification which is in Christ, and is for all, both Jew and Greek, is superior to that of Abraham. Stapulensis equates the justification which is in Christ with the effects of baptism, but goes on to teach that works must be done when opportune after baptism if men are to retain the grace of justification, otherwise it will be lost (Rom.3:25-28). Beatitude is a grace (gratia) arising not from works or merits, but from goodness communicating itself spontaneously and to the uttermost (Ps.127:2,Adv.), a truth which finds frequent repetition throughout these works;<sup>(59)</sup> but it is combined with the assertion that man's efforts are neither indispensable nor even useless. Thus the saints are said to intercede with the Lord "by opportune penitence, although only God can console and rescue them" (Ps.31,concil.). When crimes and evil actions are repented, God's mercy is never to be despaired of (Ps.129,concil.). The more effort we make to please God the greater progress we make in this area, and so the more fully can we receive his operations in ourselves for we can only receive his holiness in clean vessels (I Thess.4:14). Just as the eye must be turned towards the sun if it is to be enlightened, so must the soul be prepared to receive God's mercy (Rom.2:14). "Whoever is saved is saved by God's grace and election and not by works, yet these are joined to it and must



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not be relinquished" (Rom.11:94-95).

The whole question of the relationship between faith and works in the matter of justification and salvation is of course broached in Stapulensis' commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, which is perhaps most interesting for the concept of faith which it presents: "The just man lives by faith for he who walks by faith has not yet laid hold of eternal life; this life is consummated by faith and he awaits life in the age to come". But how is the justice of God revealed in the Gospel from faith to faith? Stapulensis answers this question with the statement that "the justice of God is the Lord Christ who is revealed from faith to faith in the Gospel", and goes on to a lengthy analysis of the Creed considered as a statement or summary of faith, showing how and where the content of each article is to be found in the Gospels. He concludes:

From this it can be easily understood that just as we achieve salvation and eternal life from faith, so from unbelief we shall perish. The unhappy man who goes through the course of this momentary probation without understanding, or rather not wanting to understand, will be mulcted by eternal death. (Rom.1:4-7).

So justification necessarily follows the obedience of the second Adam; it only fails us if we perversely do not wish to be partakers of it. (Rom.10:87). "The heart" concerns our own justification, whereby we co-operate with God in our hearts so that we may be justified always; "the lips" concern the way in which we may save others, as ministers and cooperators with God, thus also increasing the justice of God in ourselves (Rom.10:90). The prerequisite for salvation is to adhere to Christ and to the apostolic teachings, and this is contrasted with the practice of those who fast throughout Lent but neglect their normal obligations, who trust in little, obscure prayers and ignore the apostles' commands, who die in a religious habit after living all their lives in secular clothes, and



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more of the same sort. Such practices are alien to the doctrine of Christ and possibly more superstitious than religious; the practice of them is not wrong, but they must not be made ends in themselves (Rom.15:135).<sup>(60)</sup>

What is the faith by which men must adhere to the doctrine of Christ? It seems to be a supernatural power of illumination: to believe is to see that God is triune (QP.Concil.introd.). Faith is light and being; unbelief is darkness and non-being (Heb.3:14). We cannot please God without real, and not merely simulated, faith, which is a gift that God gives to his friends (I Tim.1:3), and only the baptised (or those instructed in preparation for baptism), are illuminated to see and believe (QP.Concil.introd.). Of himself man is incapable of having faith, but he who is the fount of infinite faithfulness bubbling up within him, gives and increases it. (Heb.11:53).<sup>(61)</sup>

When we say that God is faithful we mean that he is reliable (veracem), in that all that he says is true; God is true in all his words, his works and his promises, so the man who is faithful is he who believes God's words and gives undoubting assent to them. What is proffered by reason is weak and obscure; what is proffered by grace is lightsome and strong. The believer who commits himself to God is in a spacious place. The man who is unwilling to venture beyond the capacity of his own reason shuts himself up in a dark, narrow prison:

O divine faith! O wonderful foundation of life!  
The fulcrum of hope, the anchor of love, a light-  
some rope let down from heaven! Grasping this we  
climb up to that which is above all the heights!  
(Heb.11:53).

So we should also put faith in the teaching of preachers since faith is defined as the hope of things unseen, and right-mindedness is equated with persevering faith, even in the face of Christ's seeming delay (Heb.10:52):



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We shall not harden our hearts if we keep hold of that fundamental principle of existence (principium substantiae), that is of faith, firm and stable, to the end. (I Tim.1:3).

True faith can always be recognised since those who possess it will prophesy in the name of Christ and not in their own name; this was apparent in the case of the apostles and their martyrdom was the sign of it (2 Tim.3:19). Moreover it is not sufficient for a man to have sure and certain faith in himself and for himself; he must have faith before God which will be shown in love and concern for the salvation of his neighbour. Stapulensis contrasts sana fides with fides erronea in connection with the subject of giving scandal in the matter of eating and drinking: erroneous or bad faith is that state of mind which allows, or prompts a man to act even when he is not sure whether his action is sinful or not. One should always play safe; uncertain about the sinfulness of an action one should refrain from it; if one is uncertain about the lawfulness of abstaining from the action, one should perform it. If both courses seem equally doubtful, a man should seek advice from "someone more illuminated in faith than himself" (Rom.14:122).

Stapulensis has his own clear concept of what is that state of sinfulness from which the just man is saved. He holds that nothing in the corrupt nature of man can fulfil the divine law (Ps.50,Concil.), but asserts a clear distinction between original and personal sin. The former, giving rise to concupiscence, is in that sense the cause of the latter: concupiscence is man's own evil inclinations rooted in his carnal nature, which are at least partially attributable to the sin of Adam (Ps.90:6,Adv.), but concupiscence is only weakness, not sin, and can never render a man guilty before God; real sin is the result of man's own perverted will (Rom. 7:61). This tendency to sin inherited from Adam is present in all flesh and will in due course make its appearance, unless it is cured, or prevented, by grace,



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as in the case of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Rom.7:58).<sup>(62)</sup> Since the soul, on the other hand, is a direct creation not inherited from Adam, no sin or weakness of spirit is inherited from him; all spiritual or mental sin is our own personal sin (Rom.7:61). Though on occasion Stapulensis does refer to concupiscence as a fever, he asserts emphatically that the fire referred to in the phrase it is better to marry than to burn is the fire of hell and not that of concupiscence (I Cor.6:B42).

It seems that Stapulensis believes that personal sin is wholly wiped out when forgiven by God, though some of his remarks on the subject are a little ambiguous: "He covers his sin as though it were destroyed in the eyes of God, and what once existed is no longer even mentioned" (2 Cor.2:10). Such a remark must be interpreted in the light of what he has said about evil being non-existent:

Sin being in fact the privation of existence, a negation, a non-ens, is weak and ineffectual. Grace on the other hand, being a state of existence, an affirmation, an entity, is strong and effectual .... So it is obvious how much more the grace and gift of the second, the true Adam, the Lord Christ, must abound, for it is more powerful to the extent that something is more powerful than nothing. (Rom. 5:42).

The technical distinction between the guilt and the punishment due to sin, both of which may be remitted by Christ, also appears:

Onesimus has already made satisfaction to God; the grace of Christ has remitted both the fault and the punishment. The grace and mercy of Christ have already made satisfaction to God for all the faithful and the repentant, although satisfaction has frequently not yet been made in the world. Onesimus has not yet made satisfaction in this world to his master. (Philemon 4).

Such forgiveness normally presumes that the sinner not only experiences a change of heart, but also manifests this by some outward penitential action, though Stapulensis' expressions on this point are again ambiguous:



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In some conventicles where they scourge themselves (.... and so on), they trust more in these disciplines than in the grace of the redemption of the Saviour. This is a purely human outlook (though it is different if pontifical authority has confirmed such practices as a sign of penance...). It is not as though such maceration could make satisfaction for our sins....Christ the Lord made satisfaction and we participate in his satisfaction....Let us not then show ourselves ungrateful by our works of zealous activity, or bodily austerity. (Col.2:10).<sup>(63)</sup>

While Stapulensis insists that justification and salvation come only from the grace and mercy of God, he goes out of his way to repudiate any rigid doctrine of predestination, even if the text on which he is commenting would seem to imply it.<sup>(64)</sup> He distinguishes between falling into temptation which is caused by the attacks of devils, and perishing altogether, which is not. Those who fall do so because of their own evil desires (concupiscentiis) and lack of faith, and not precisely because of the snares and attacks of demons. Not all those who fall immediately perish altogether; many make the effort to rise again and continue to live more carefully afterwards (Ps.90:6,Adv.). Our Lord and God knows the number of those who will receive the eternal heritage; all those who are written in the book of life he calls by name, predefines, predestines, summons and calls to himself. His omnipotence is immeasurable, and his wisdom and prescience incomprehensible (Ps.146:4-8, Exp.Cont.). However Stapulensis explicitly denies that God's foreknowledge inhibits man's free choice of good or bad actions, or that God's choice is based on such actions. It is based on his own foreknowledge operating in both mercy and justice, for God always works with man; when man wills what is good he cooperates with God but when he wills or works what is evil he is working against God's help (Rom.9:79-80). When a man who does good is accepted by God it is not because of what he does, but on account of God's will and mercy, which is infinite; all acceptance and justification come from his will. While God's mercy helps the good man towards good actions,



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his justice and appropriate punishment do not stop the wicked man from doing evil. To harden Pharoah's heart means to abandon him to his own way of acting,<sup>(65)</sup> just as wax left to itself and turned away from the sun, becomes hard, and only melts when it is turned towards the sun. Nor can sin and evil be attributed to God, even though our good works come from him, except in so far as they come about through his permissive will (per accidens et permissive). God wants all men to be saved and to do good, but freely; he does not force them even to do good.

Stapulensis also embarks on "a more profound answer for the more learned": to will and not to will, to love and to hate, are in God the same thing; they coincide precisely and the apparent change or difference is in us and not in God. So it is true that in God we are both loved and hated, chosen and not chosen; nevertheless God's will is the sole cause of justification, just as the sun and not the eye turned towards it is the cause of illumination (Rom.9:79-84). In fact God always predestines even when men are said not to be predestined, for in God to predestine and not to predestine coincide, as do to will and not to will, to know and to be ignorant. Perhaps not to predestine all men to life is as alien to the nature of God as it is for him to be ignorant of something, for even when he is said to be ignorant of something he does really know it, as when he is said to be ignorant of evil and to know good (Rom. 11:101).<sup>(66)</sup>

However Stapulensis is not prepared to pursue this line of thought too far for it must not lead to saying that the elect cannot lose their position and that the rejected cannot be saved. What about Judas, who was presumably chosen? And the sinful woman, who was presumably rejected? Providence is common to both good and evil but glory and eternal life are only for the good; eternal ignominy and confusion, eternal death are the lot of the wicked. Here Stapulensis is using the

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terms good and bad to cover both belief and right moral conduct:

Glory is the lot of the good if they are faithful, and confusion the lot of the wicked if they are unfaithful, that is those who believe neither by word nor deed. Those who have the word of faith but impugn it by their deeds, who say one should not fornicate but do so (...and the like), their lot is with the faithless. As long as they live in that way they must be called unbelievers, but if they turn back to honouring the God they have dishonoured, to loving the one they have offended, to cultivating the justice they have transgressed, their name is changed and from being faithless they become again believers. (I Tim.4:18,3). (67)

In man rejection is a turning away and election is a conversion, but these are all the same thing in God whose unchangeable will is to have mercy and to save. Election and rejection are necessary in God and contingent in man. The two which are opposed and can never meet in man are not so in God, but Stapulensis feels that to pursue the investigation further is beyond human power: "If anyone understood this coincidence and could solve the ideas it raises he would have wonderful scope for sacred philosophising, but our intelligence does not stretch that far". He adds one further possible clue to the problem of the relationship between God's foreknowledge and man's free will when he points out that "before" and "after" are in the creature; to know and to foreknow are all the same thing in eternity (Rom.9:85). He further advocates leaving all judgement about the elect and the reprobate to God, since many whom men judge to be righteous are not so in the eyes of God, and vice-versa; men cannot have knowledge of this matter without a special revelation or efficacious sign from God, though it would seem that he does admit the possibility of such a revelation (I Cor. 4:19). Ultimately for Stapulensis the only guarantee of salvation is membership of the body of Christ, the Church:



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If anyone wishes to be saved he must take up the cross of Christ, meditate on it, cling to it, carry it. That is to say, as a member of Christ's body he must mortify his evil desires and follow Christ in this world. Such is the only real demonstration of religion either for those who remain in the secular world, or those who flee from it (I Cor.1:14).

### Chapter 3 FOOTNOTES:

- (1) In the present thesis the first and second editions of the Quincuplex Psalterium, 1509 and 1513, have been used (Ushaw College Library, Durham). The second and third editions of the Epistle Commentary, 1515 and 1517 (Durham University Library and Ushaw College Library), have been chiefly used, with some reference to the first edition of 1512 (Bodleian Library, Oxford). A facsimilie reprint of the second edition of the Quincuplex Psalterium has been published, ed. Guy Bédouelle (Geneva, 1979).
- (2) See chapter 1, note (40), and chapter 2, note (32). Another work ostensibly on the same subject is not very helpful: James Daniel Jordan, The Church Reform Principles in the Biblical Works of Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples (unpublished thesis for Duke University, North Carolina, 1966) discerns only the centrality of scripture in Stapulensis' reforming programme without integrating this in any way into his concept of the Church as a whole.
- (3) Cf. Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Vatican II, 1964) trans. Colman O'Neill (New York, 1975) article 8: "...the society structured with hierarchical organs and the mystical body of Christ, the visible society and the spiritual community, the earthly Church and the Church endowed with heavenly riches, are not to be thought of as two realities. On the contrary they form one complex reality which comes together from a human and a divine element. For this reason the Church is compared, not without significance, to the mystery of the Incarnate Word...".
- (4) See Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. p.201.
- (5) For a summary of the patristic usage see Emile Mersch, The Whole Christ, The Historical Development of the Doctrine of the Mystical Body in Scripture and Tradition (2nd edition, Louvain, 1936) trans. John R. Kelly (London, 1938). For the Pastor of Hermas, see chapter 1, note (28). For St. John Damascene, De Fide Orthodoxa, see chapter 1, note (20).
- (6) For a summary of the mediaeval usage see Pope Pius XII, Mystici Corporis Christi (Vatican, 1943) edited by Sebastian Tromp, pp.69-73.
- (7) E.g. Galatians 5:28; Ephesians 2-4 passim; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9.
- (8) E.g. Romans 6:45; Ephesians 1:4, 4:11; Phillipians 2:11; Colossians 1:3; Hebrews 12:88.
- (9) E.g. 1 Corinthians 1:3, 6:36-37, 12:19, 13:92. Ephesians 2:6, 4:11; Phillipians 3:19; Colossians 1:3, 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Titus 2:17; Hebrews 6:22.



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- (10) Cf. Gregory Nazianzen, Oratio 45:23, P.G.36,654-5: "...Iam vero paschalis particeps erimus, nunc quidem adhuc typice, tametsi apertius quam in vetere lege; (legale siquidem pascha nec enim dicere verebor figura erat figurae obscurior....)".
- (11) "Faithful", Latin: fidelis. Slight ambiguity about the use of this word makes it difficult to decide what should be the appropriate English translation. The use of fideles (Latin) and fidèles (French) in Stapulensis' works ranges over a full spectrum of significance, from the general connotation of the English: "the faithful", i.e.: the ordinary mass of Christians, to those "true believers" whose firm hope and trust is only in the mercy of Christ, and not in their own works. The meanings observable are all interconnected however; "the faithful" is sometimes used in the slightly more precise sense to distinguish Christians from Jews or pagans who do not believe in Christ, (e.g: Quincuplex, Ps.4:8, Ex. Cont. Comm. in Cath. Ep. I Pet.2). It occasionally designates those who give a merely intellectual assent, which is noted to be insufficient for salvation (e.g: Comm. in Paul.Ep. Rom. 3:28). At times it indicates those who do perform the actions which correspond with belief, (e.g: Quinc. Ps.90:6, Adv. Comm. in Cath.Ep. I Pet.1). It never seems to be used in an overtly sectarian sense to designate exclusively those who are committed to Stapulensis' evangelical reform movement, but in his later works it does occur in association with aspirations or exhortations to the reform of the Church by means of the preaching and acceptance of pure evangelical doctrine (e.g: Comm. in 4 Ev. Matt.8, Comm. in Cath. Ep. Jas.4, or Sunday Hom. 10 post Pent). In the Gospel Commentary a significant passage on John 20 associates it with Stapulensis' characteristic teaching about how the sense of Scripture should be understood: "Credidit ergo...Mariae, sed adhuc sine fide mansit, similiter et Petrus. Et illius infidelitas, suam et Petri ignorantiam fuisse causam asserit, dicens: 'Nondum enim sciebant scripturam...' Nondum datus erat sensus scripturam, ne quis putet se suo sensu divinas scripturas intelligere...sed solo sensu qui a Deo datur... Fide carebat, ideo visum Jesum non agnovit. Fide enim Jesus cognoscitur...". In the Epistle Commentary on I Peter 2, Stapulensis' other characteristic theme of christiformitas appears, when christiformis is equated with fidelis as the total summing-up of all that is implied. It seems therefore that no significant difference is to be detected between Stapulensis' use of the adjective fidelis and the verb credere in Latin, or fidèle and croire in French. The participles credentes and croyants are simply more apt in some contexts.



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- (12) Beyond his ordinary theological knowledge, Stapulensis' immediate source for this technical term was probably John Damascene, De Fide Orthodoxa, III,2: De modo conceptionis dei verbi et divina eius incarnatione; see Stapulensis' 1512/13 edition, fol. 85r.
- (13) Stapulensis' usage of the word sacramentum includes the entire range of its meaning from the word "oath", ὄρκος (Heb.6:26) to the precise list of the seven sacraments as defined by the Second Council of Lyons in 1274, (Ps.18,Tit; Gal. 6:32; 2 Tim.2:9; Heb.9:45), explicitly including reference to matrimony (Eph.5:21) and especially to the Eucharist (Ps.49:15, Ex.Cont; 2 Thess. 2: A5; Tit.1:3). The word is most frequently used however as interchangeable with "mystery", μυστήριον. Sometimes it indicates mysteries which are, as such, ineffable (Eph.5:21) and is especially used in reference to the being and nature of God (Ps.8:6, Adv; Ps.49:1, Adv) to the Trinity (Ps.41:7, Adv; Ps.42:3, Adv.) to the Incarnation (2 Tim.2:9, Heb.7:A27) and to the whole plan of redemption effected for man (Eph.2:6; Col.2:7; I Tim.3:14). The word is also used to express the entire process of the revelation of such mysteries (Ps.49:1, Adv; Gal.4:23; I Tim.3:14), and the perceptible signs by which such revelation is conveyed (Eph.5:21; 2 Tim.2:9). Specific focus on the seven sacraments is thus a natural development within this richer context. It is very difficult to see why Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.229, note 46, says that the word sacramentum is rare in Stapulensis' works and is confined to the seven sacraments!
- (14) See also Rom.8:63, Eph.1:2 & 2:5.
- (15) Cf. Athanasius, De Incarnatione, chapters 8 and 9.
- (16) Cf. The Chalcedonian Definition of the Faith: "... consubstantial with the Father according to his divinity, and consubstantial with us according to his manhood...." and the discussion which had preceded it; see R.V. Sellers, Two Ancient Christologies (London, 1940).
- (17) In grammatical discussion of this point (Heb.2:A2) Stapulensis points out that he himself has treated it more fully in his commentary on the work of Richard of St. Victor, De Trinitate. (See above chapter 2, Appendix II). Many of the views here discerned in the Scriptural works can also be found in Stapulensis' theological and spiritual works of the same period.



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- (18) The ecclesiological aspects of the hypostatic union which had concerned the Fathers of the Church and earlier theologians were connected with the oneness of the person of Christ and the relationship of his body the Church with this one person. Occasional suggestions made of a hypostatic union between the Church and the Holy Spirit had been held to be erroneous. It has been said that the question of a hypostatic union between the visible aspect of the Church and its divine "support" was not raised until the time of Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan (1469-1534), an exact contemporary of Stapulensis; see J.B. Franzelin, Theses de Ecclesia Christi (Rome, 1887) and Y.M.J. Congar, Sainte Eglise, Etudes et Approches Ecclesiologiques (Paris, 1963). It would seem to be here that Stapulensis' originality lies, though some foreshadowing of the idea can be found in two of his sources, Nicolas of Cusa, De Docta Ignorantia, III, chapter 12 De Ecclesia; and St. Hildegarde, Scivias, III, 3, 8, in the collection, Trium Virorum... edited by Stapulensis; (see above chapter 1, note (28)).
- (19) The use of the word "animal" here signifies rational living creatures whatever their present state; in this passage and the one quoted below, angels, saints and the souls of saints are specified.
- (20) After the New Testament writings this imagery appears already in the Pastor of Hermas, in the Fourth Vision.
- (21) A nice example of the perennial mother-in-law problem! Cf. Matt. 10:35.
- (22) The theme of schism and heresy recurs in St. Hildegarde, Scivias, and in Robert of Uzès, Liber Sermonum, in the same collection Trium Virorum, though in the latter case the reference seems to be specifically to the schism between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.
- (23) Stapulensis freely admits that there are "various states and grades" in religion, though he insists that these should not be a cause of schism. Evidently he accepts the validity of religious orders, but must have been aware, from the events surrounding the reform of St. Germain-des-Prés, that such practices and ways of life could be so divisive as to contradict fundamental christian unity. See above, chapter 1, notes (18) & (41).
- (24) See above, note (23).



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- (25) An interesting corroboration of Stapulensis' own intentions in his earlier work of preparing and publishing editions of philosophical and mathematical works. He did not apparently publish any medical works himself, but he names Hippocrates and Galen in this passage. These remarks harmonise with his own dislike of the mediaeval commentaries of the scholastic era and his conviction that the reliability of sources was in direct proportion to their primitive antiquity.
  
- (26) It must be remembered that the controversial situation was not yet so sharply polarised as it was later to become at the height of the Reformation, and the compulsion to take sides was not yet acute.
  
- (27) At a later date, for instance after 1520, the allusions in this passage to good and evil spirits might suggest reference to the Anabaptists or other radical groups in the Reformation. At this early stage it seems impossible to identify what groups are being referred to, though the "schools" of Northern Italy, such as Ficino's Platonic Academy in Florence in which Stapulensis had participated in 1492, might be in question; see above, chapter 1.
  
- (28) Cf. the remark of Nicolas of Cusa about the "stupid credulity" of the Saracens, who believe that Christ is the most perfect man, born of a virgin and translated to heaven, but will not accept him as God, saviour and mediator; De Docta Ignorantia, III, chapter 8. See also Stapulensis' own edition of Ricoldi, Contra Sectam Mahumeticam; (see above chapter 1, note (24)).
  
- (29) The same point occurs in Stapulensis' introduction to his edition of the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch (see above chapter 2, Appendix II), where he says that the Church derives its "coelestiform liturgy" from the antiphonal psalm-singing of the angels. In a marginal comment on the Letter to Smyrna in the same work he points out that honour should be given to bishops, priests and deacons because of those whose form they bear.
  
- (30) Episcopo visitatio, intendentia, observatio episcopi in suos dicitur (I Tim.3:12) - an interesting forerunner of the concept adopted by later non-conformist churches, and made use of in the Agreed Statement on Authority in the Church published by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (Venice, 1976).



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- (31) This material is very dependent on the work of Pseudo-Dionisius; cf. De Celestia Hierarchia, chapters 2 & 3, where the discussion of an ordered hierarchy includes the terms deiformis and angeliformis; and De Divinis Nominibus, chapter 6, where a description of such a graded hierarchy is said to achieve deiformem quadem unitatem.
- (32) The same point is made in Stapulensis' introduction to the work Bernonis Abbatis...de Officio Missae (see above chapter 1, note (27)).
- (33) Both these themes are prominent in the works of Robert of Uzès and St. Hildegarde, edited by Stapulensis, see above notes (18) & (22).
- (34) Stapulensis makes explicit reference to the criticism by Robert of Uzès of the "useless word battles" and "fruitless, frivolous and inane studies" in this context (I Tim.6:A41).
- (35) Stapulensis' remark in this context, that the adoption of the celibacy rule in the western Church in contrast with the practice of the Greek Church, had caused many "to fall into the devil's trap" (I Tim.3:12) might suggest that he regretted the general obligation of celibacy, but he does not seem to have seriously advocated its abolition.
- (36) Stapulensis' general respect for the institution of the papacy might also be inferred from the fact that he included the works of Pseudo-Linus in his Pauline Commentary (see above, chapter 2) and edited the letters of Leo the Great (see above chapter 2, appendix II).
- (37) A number of passages in St. Hildegarde: Scivias assert the ultimate indefectibility of the Church but do not deal explicitly with the papacy in this connection.
- (38) It has been suggested (by T.H.L. Parker in an unpublished comment) that Stapulensis seems to sit so loosely to the papacy as to be "Gallican" in sentiment. While this may be true of the impression given by these scriptural works, it is partly contradicted by some later remarks; see below, chapter 4.
- (39) E.g. Ps.5,tit; Gal.5:25; Eph.1:2; 2:6; 4:11; Philip.3:B9; Col.3:13; Heb.6:A22.
- (40) The passage seems to be reminiscent of St. Augustine's discussion of psychological analogies for the Trinity; see De Trinitate, book 9.



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- (41) It would seem that Stapulensis' expressions mean a good deal more than the "bare memorial" concept that later came to be associated with the teaching of Zwingli, e.g: "...fideles mei...vescentur de sacrificio laudis reficientur hostia salutari, satiabuntur spiritualiter...vivent animae eorum sine fine, beata immortalitate donate. Reminiscentur: memoriam passionis meae agent in sacrificio laudis..." (Ps.21,Tit.) or: "...calix meus inebrians...poculum quod michi das sacrosanctum sanguinem tuum, precium redemptionis nostrae..." (Ps.22, Tit.) The same point occurs in the final colophon of Bernonis...De Officio Missae, which reads "...ex officina...anno Christi salvatoris, qui est altare, victima et sacrificium nostrum superbenedictum in saecula saeculorum, MDX, nono Cal.Decembris. Amen."
- (42) Emphasis on this point can also be found in the appendix Stapulensis added to the preface of the second (1513) edition of the Quincuplex Psalterium: "Poena enim Christi...qui pro omnia peccatis et poenis, etiam infernorum, sua poena satisfecit...".
- (43) "Unicum sanctum sanctorum" is here translated "Saint of saints" rather than "Holy of holies" to indicate the personal reference to Christ.
- (44) Stapulensis does not at this stage enter into the question of the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.
- (45) See Ps.21,Tit; Heb.6:22 & 6:A22; also marginal note on Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, letter to Philadelphians.
- (46) This statement closely approaches the position subsequently defined by the Council of Trent, session 6, 1547, in its Decree on Justification, concerning the preparation required in adults.
- (47) Cf. Pseudo-Dionisius, De Ecc.Hier. chapter 7: "...verum illi sancti, qui se totos christiformem  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\tau\omicron\epsilon\iota\omega\varsigma$  sortem percepturos cognoverunt, ubi ab huius vitae finem accesserunt viam suam ad incorruptionem..."; also: Ep.8:2,  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\tau\omicron\epsilon\iota\omega\varsigma$ .
- (48) Origen's concept of deification, which had seemed to be a purely intellectual union of the soul with God taking no account of the incarnation, was corrected in this respect by the Cappadocian Fathers and St. Maximus the Confessor. Pseudo-Dionisius seems to have been heavily indebted to Gregory of Nyssa; see Benjamin Drewery "Deification", in Peter Brooks, ed. Christian Spirituality, Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp (London, 1975).



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- (49) E.g. St. Augustine, Sermon 27,66: "...Deformitas Christi te format....deformitas illius pulchritudo nostra est...".
- (50) E.g. Symeon the New Theologian, AD 949-1022.
- (51) It seems that Stapulensis changed his own translation of Pseudo-Dionysius' terms from "Christi speciem" (see his 1499 edition) to "christiformem", under the influence of Nicolas of Cusa; see the prefatory letter to the 1514 edition of the works of Nicolas of Cusa, addressed to Denis Briçonnet: "...Enim vero triplicem comperio theologiam. Primam et summam, intellectualem; secundam et mediam, rationalem; tertiam et infimam, sensualem ac imaginariam...Ut intelligas, sapientissime Pater, theologiam Cusae ad primam illam intellectualem theologiam totam pertinere; et qua nulla magis iuvamur ad sacra Dionysii Ariopagitae adyta, et eorum qui generosius, augustus et sublimius de deo philosophati sunt dicta conquirenda..."
- (52) Cf. Nicolas of Cusa, De Docta Ignorantia, III, chapter 11: "...Quomodo eligeret pro Christo mortem, qui immortalitatem non speraret? Et quia credit quod sperantes in eum non deserit, sed sempiternam eis beatitudinem praestat, hinc pro Christo omnia pati, ob tantam mercedem retributionis, pro modico fidelis habet. Magna est profecto fidei vis, quae hominem christiformem efficit. Ut linquat sensibilia, expoliet se contagiis carnis, ambulet in viis dei cum timore, sequatur vestigia Christi cum laetitia, et crucem voluntarie acceptet cum exultatione...". See M. L. Fürher, 'Purgation, Illumination and Perfection in Nicolas of Cusa', Downside Review July, 1980.  
Stapulensis' understanding of the concept went a good deal beyond this Aristotelian and Pauline notion of μυνησις.
- (53) Besides the expressions: conformitas, deformitas/difformitas, informitas, in their various modes, Stapulensis also uses: deiformiter, diviniformiter, coelestiformiter, spiritiformiter, angeliformiter, as well as: igniformis, luciformis, maioriformis, soliformitas, summiformis. Other related terms which occur are: archetypus, exemplar, idea, imago, meta, proportio, ratio, scopus, typus.
- (54) Stapulensis makes a careful and correct distinction between exemplum and exemplar: "...Cum invitat Paulus Philippenses ad imitandum secum, ad imitationem exemplaris vocat qui Christus est, et ad figendum in Christo oculum. Cum autem ad se attendendum, non vocat ad exemplar sed ad typum et exemplum. Exemplum enim typus est, et exemplar archetypus...". (Philip.3:11).



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- (55) There would seem to be neoplatonic echoes in this use of the term ogdoad for the 22 sections into which Stapulensis divides psalm 118. Each ogdoad is separately provided with its apparatus, but in this case a spiritual meditation replaces the Titulus and Expositio Continua before the usual section Adverte.
- (56) Cf. Pseudo-Dionisius, De Divinis Nominibus, chapter 4,20: "...Malum ~~itaque~~ non est res aliquam..."
- (57) In Pseudo-Dionisius' work De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia the highest grade consists of the sacraments, the second of the clergy and the lowest of the laity. For an argument that St. Thomas Aquinas came to see the Church in the same, Platonic manner as a result of reading the Greek Fathers, see J. Geiselmann, Christus und die Kirche nach Thomas von Aquin in Theologische Quartalschrift, CVII (1926), pp.198-222 and CVIII (1927), pp.233-255; also Y.M.J. Congar, The Idea of the Church in St. Thomas Aquinas in The Thomist, I No. 1 (April 1939), pp.331-359.
- (58) The immediate occasion of this protest was criticism levelled against his comments on psalm 30 in the first edition, where it seemed as though Stapulensis had concurred in the idea attributed to Nicolas of Cusa, that Christ on descending into hell actually suffered further pains there. Stapulensis rejects this idea for himself, and further analyses what Cusa did say on the subject, and exonerates him also from holding this opinion. The main interest of the appendix to the preface in the second edition lies in the careful definition given by Stapulensis of his right to discuss controversial theological topics, putting forward all sides of the question, even those held to be erroneous, so long as he does not himself assert erroneous views: "Verum nequaquam ita sentias velim, nam qui disputat non asserit; qui ubique conditionis particulam inserit non asserit; qui se pro ea parte nichil asserere velle dicit non asserit". He was to invoke the same distinction between putting forward a position for the sake of argument and making an affirmation, between discussing and deciding, in the Magdalen debate; see below chapter 5.
- (59) E.g. "...a deo iustificatio, glorificatio, immortalitas et christiformitas..." (Rom.2:14). See also Ps.5,Tit; Ps.6,Tit; Ps.31,Tit; Ps.31:1, Adv; Ps.43:28,Ex.Con; Ps.123,Concil; I Cor.8:57.



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- (60) Stapulensis has a number of passages putting devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the saints into the right perspective, e.g: "...At dices: ergo alios sanctos non amabo, in aliis sanctis non sperabo. Immo, omnes amabis et in omnibus sperabis, sed amor ille refulgentia Christi amoris, et spes illa refulgentia spei quam in Christo confidis...". (Heb.3:12).
- (61) See also Ps.86:5; Ps.110; Psalter Concil. introd; I Cor.11:78 & 11:83; I Cor.13:92; Eph.2:5; Col. 2:7; Col.4:16 & 4:18; Heb.12:77.
- (62) The doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary had been the subject of debate throughout the middle ages from the time of St.Anselm in the eleventh century, and eminent theologians had been found on both sides. It had been defined by the Council of Basle on 15 September 1439, but since this council had been officially dissolved before that date the acts of the remaining participants were of doubtful validity. The definition had not been repudiated however and Pope Sixtus IV had sanctioned new liturgical texts for the celebration of the feast in 1477. The Sorbonne required of its members an oath to profess the doctrine of the immaculate conception. It seems clear that Stapulensis believed this doctrine but that it was still a subject of debate in his day is evidenced by the fact that his friend Josse Clichtove wrote a polemical work in its defence, De Puritate Conceptionis Beatae Mariae Virginis (Paris, 1513). See Jean Pierre Massaut, Critique et Tradition à la Veille de la Réforme en France (Paris, 1974), pp.37-45.
- (63) Cf. Chapter 1, note (183). If Stapulensis' later works gave Beda reason to think he held Lutheran views on the subject of penance, his expressions on the subject in the present work are entirely orthodox. He employs the nouns poenitentia and sacramentum reconciliationis and the verbs poenitere and resipiscere to mean an interior change of heart sincerely expressed in words (Ps. 31:2, Ex.Con.) normally leading to the use of the Church's sacramental rite (Ps.21,Tit.) which he regards as essential (Heb.10:50). He explicitly rejects a superstitious attitude to practices of mortification which treats them as an automatic guarantee of that forgiveness which comes only from God's mercy through the satisfaction made by Christ, but accepts that such penitential works may be imposed by the authority of the Church as a sign of true penitence (Col.2:10).

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- (64) Cf. above, chapter 2, note (48).
- (65) Stapulensis here seems to be echoing St. Augustine, Quaestiones in Exodum, II, question 18.
- (66) Stapulensis is here invoking the principle of the coincidence of opposites in the providence of God discussed by Nicolas of Cusa; see De Docta Ignorantia, I, chapter 22. Some brief analysis of the idea is to be found in John B. Payne, "Erasmus and Lefèvre D'Etaples as Interpreters of Paul", Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, LXV (1974), pp.54-83.
- (67) Cf. note (64) above.



Chapter 4: The concept of the Church discernible in Stapulensis' scriptural works between 1522 and 1527.

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Stapulensis continued to edit works of philosophy, theology and piety for another ten years, but after 1519 his attention was directed solely to the scriptures.<sup>(1)</sup> The works under consideration in this chapter and the next fall into three groups distinguished by the audiences to whom they were addressed. The Commentary on the Gospels which appeared in 1522, though in Latin was generally addressed to "Christian readers"; the Translation of the Gospels into French which appeared just a year later in June 1523 was addressed to "all Christian men and women" as was the rest of the New Testament in French which followed in November 1523 and the same address prefaced the French translation of the Psalter printed in February 1523/4.<sup>(2)</sup> The second group consists of the one work, Epistres et Evangiles pour les Cinquantes et Deux Sepmaines de L'An, the earliest known edition of which can be assigned to the year 1525.<sup>(3)</sup> Since this presents the liturgical Epistle and Gospel readings in French with a suitable homily annexed to each it was presumably intended for the use of parochial preachers, and so would be indirectly addressed to the general public. A third group consists of the Latin Psalter published in May 1524, and the Commentary on the Catholic Epistles apparently completed by the end of 1524 but not printed until 1527. Both these works were addressed to distinguished patrons, the former to Jean de Selve, councillor to Francis I and first president of the Parlement of Paris, the latter to Antoine du Prat, then chancellor of France and shortly to become Archbishop of Sens.<sup>(4)</sup>

The difference of address in these various works would seem to reflect the contemporary situation in the diocese of Meaux where they were composed.<sup>(5)</sup> The first group addressed to the general public would seem to have formed part of the programme of reform and renewal



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undertaken by Bishop Briçonnet, and the composition of the homilies on the Sunday Epistles and Gospels would reflect his effort to provide for adequate preaching in his diocese. The explanation of the dedication of the third group to prominent patrons is to be found in the censure to which the Gospel Commentary was subjected by the Sorbonne in 1523.<sup>(6)</sup> For his Commentary on the Catholic Epistles Stapulensis had again made his own Latin translation, and had supplied variant readings in his Latin edition of the Psalter, thus implicitly criticising the Vulgate, a procedure which had provoked criticism ten years earlier in the case of the Pauline commentary.<sup>(7)</sup> The accusations of heresy which led to his flight to Strasbourg in 1525 presumably explain the delay in the actual printing of the Catholic Epistle Commentary.

A survey of Stapulensis' views in the period 1522-7 will range over all these works which, with the slight exceptions to be noted, seem to present a coherent picture. In each case a prefatory letter expresses the aim of the book and much of his position is to be discerned from these. The two commentaries and the Sunday homilies provide further substantial evidence, but the French translations and the Latin Psalter contain only brief "arguments" at the head of each psalm or chapter as indications of his own views.<sup>(8)</sup> The letter prefacing the Gospel commentary explains the reasons for the composition and the method adopted. Stapulensis insists at some length that the word of God is the sole necessary rule and teacher of eternal life:

If only our rule of life were that of the early Church which knew no other rule than the Gospel... which had no other mark (scopus) to aim at than Christ... If we lived in this way the eternal Gospel of Christ would flourish now as it did then. Everything depended in every way on Christ... everyone lived not by his own spirit but by that of Christ... All were one in Christ.



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Rulers should promote the spread of the Gospel in their realms and bishops and preachers are compared with the angel seen by St. John in the Apocalypse flying in mid-heaven carrying the eternal Gospel. While he clearly sees "the Gospel" in a general sense as the good news of salvation obtainable in Christ, he also sees it explicitly as the printed text of the four gospels themselves, which everyone ought to have in his own hand, and so it is his wish to promote a more Gospel-centred religion that has prompted his composition of the commentary to assist those who heed his advice in the matter. The same pious approach to scripture that had characterised his earlier works is still apparent. He addresses himself to the hypothetical disciple who says, "I want to understand the Gospel so that I may believe the Gospel and follow the pure worship of Christ". He reproves him mildly, asserting that this order of priorities must be reversed:

Christ did not give us the Gospel to be understood but to be believed, since it contains many things which transcend not only our understanding but even that of all creatures who are not hypostatically united to God. (9)

The Gospel is first to be believed and then understood as a result of such belief. Belief we are told by the Lord Himself must be preceded by repentance, which Stapulensis extends to include the rejection of all that is carnal and merely human, a sentiment which reappears in connection with psalms 16 and 19 in his Latin Psalter. The word of God alone contains the sole saving truth; this gathers all things into one; human views, interests and affairs disperse and so destroy that salvation. Stapulensis justifies the composition of a further commentary by comparing such works to "stars which cannot explain or illuminate the sun, but do partially dispel the darkness of the night". He classifies his own commentary as being "purgative" in the sense of being the first stage in the three-fold Dionisian scheme; as the night cannot be illuminated by the stars unless the darkness of the clouds is first dispersed and the atmosphere



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purged, so neither can our ignorance be enlightened by the more important Gospel commentaries unless the darkness of our minds is purged and dispersed. So he places his own work in the lowest stage of this process and calls it merely Commentarii initiatorii in Quatuor Evangelia. Perhaps this limited aim also partially explains the abbreviated character of its textual apparatus in comparison with that supplied for the earlier scriptural works. The motivation for this work is clearly Stapulensis' reforming interest in evangelical preaching which was already noticeable ten years earlier; it is now much more sharply accentuated, but not different in substance, and the pastoral situation of the diocese of Meaux would seem to be sufficient cause for that accentuation.

The translation of the New Testament into French appeared first in two volumes; the Gospels were printed in June 1523 and the rest of the New Testament in November of the same year. Each volume was preceded by an exhortatory letter addressed to all Christian men and women, and when the whole work was produced as one volume in April 1524, the exhortatory letter preceding the second part was retained in its place in the body of the work. The avowed reason for the production of this translation follows immediately from the aims expressed in the previous Gospel commentary; it is the desire that all Christians, of whatever rank or whatever degree of learning or ignorance, may read the Gospel for themselves. Three reasons make it imperative that they should: Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; Stapulensis asserts that this means that Christ wants his Gospel to be purely preached throughout the world so that people may not be deceived, or deceive themselves with the doctrines of men and so turn away from Christ, the only source of salvation. The phraseology is sufficiently non-committal to refer simply to the Christian era in general, but perhaps Stapulensis is thinking specifically of the current reform movement in the Meaux diocese.<sup>(10)</sup> The



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general lament about deceptive human doctrines reappears in his Latin Psalter in connection with psalms 94, 126 and 137. His second reason for an urgent plea to read the Gospels is the need to correct the many great faults of Christianity by the abandonment of all human traditions and a return to the unique following of the word of God which is spirit and life. Finally there is the ever-present menace of the Turks, the enemies of the faith.

The letter prefacing the second part of the New Testament tells us that the express desire of Queen Louise of Savoy and her daughter Marguerite of Angoulême was the occasion for the production of the work. Stapulensis points out that a desire for true and life-giving doctrine stirred up by God himself had already prompted Charles VIII to commission the translation of the Bible made by Jean de Rely in 1478, and explains that the French princesses had expressed the wish that that version should be revised and corrected, thus implying that he did himself make use of this earlier translation. Given this platform Stapulensis develops further his theme that the Gospel is the Christian's rule of life. Just as every member of a religious order is provided with a copy of his rule, in the vernacular, where necessary, and urged to read and study it frequently for himself as well as listening to the formal homilies and exhortations on the rule provided in the chapter-meetings of the community, so should the ordinary Christian read the Gospel. This passage seems to make clear that Stapulensis did mean that every Christian should actually have a printed copy of the New Testament in his own possession, a suggestion apparently acted upon by Bishop Briçonnet in providing them free of charge to those who could not afford them.<sup>(11)</sup> It is also clear however that this suggestion is not a licence to reject the official teaching authority of the Church; Stapulensis is explicit that Christians must come to "chapter" to hear their rule proclaimed and explained. They must come to



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church to hear their pastors preach on the scriptures and the Christian life. So all "bishops, curates, vicars, doctors and preachers" should exhort their people to frequent reading and meditation on the Gospels, a suggestion supported by Stapulensis with a long quotation from St. John Chrysostom to exactly the same effect.<sup>(12)</sup>

Even though he has cited the royal request as the occasion for the work, Stapulensis feels it necessary to defend his action in translating the Gospel into the vernacular with a number of cogent arguments.<sup>(13)</sup> It has already been done in other parts of Europe and will make those ignorant of Latin more readily disposed to receive the present grace, love and mercy of Jesus Christ. Even if it does contain difficult and obscure passages beyond the comprehension of ordinary folk, this applies to the Greek original and the Latin translations too, so that not only the simple but also the learned, like Arius, Eunomius, Photius and Sabellius have erred without a vernacular version. Simple folk cannot be expected to appreciate the beauty and value of the scriptures in a version they cannot understand any more than a blind man can appreciate the beauty of the sun by listening to a description of it. This line of argument is supported by Christ's words: I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from the wise and prudent and revealing them to little ones; (Matt.11:25) and two other quotations round off the defence in a fairly resounding manner; those who wish to prohibit vernacular versions are compared with the doctors of the law whom Christ condemned for taking away the key of knowledge (Lk.11:52) and finally Stapulensis asks how can the Gospel be preached to every creature in the whole world in accord with the final exhortation of St. Mark's Gospel, and how can all be taught to observe whatsoever I have commanded you (Matt.28:20) if it is not put into the language of the simple?



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A different objection to his translation is anticipated by a lengthy statement of his fidelity to the original, to which nothing has been added, and from which nothing has been removed; nor has he resorted to paraphrase but adopted a literalist rendering except where paraphrase was absolutely necessary to render the Latin intelligible. Indeed he has some hard words of condemnation for the presumption of those who think they can make their version more readable or elegant than the original Evangelists, inspired as they were by the Holy Spirit himself. It should be remembered that Stapulensis held a concept of inspiration akin to dictation by the Holy Spirit,<sup>(14)</sup> and this veneration for the words themselves of the original is again apparent in the preface to his French Psalter, and in connection with psalms 47 and 48 in his Latin edition.

The preface to the French translation of the Psalter substantially repeats much of what has been said in connection with the French New Testament, specifically applying it to the psalter. God wishes us to pray to him in spirit and in truth and has given us his word that we might not fall into error and superstition. The book of the psalms was composed to teach us to pray as God wishes; now it is put into the vernacular so that those who do not know Latin can pray with greater devotion and affection, and understand what they are saying like all other nations. The second and third editions of this French Psalter which appeared within two years of the first,<sup>(15)</sup> also carried an Exhortacion Finale, evidently added in response to criticism of the first edition. Here the priority of the psalms as prayer in spirit and in truth such as Christ required, is strongly re-asserted, and the same views are expressed in the Latin edition in connection with psalms 64 and 99. Simple clerics, too, by comparing this work verse-by-verse with their office-book, will more easily come to understand what they are reading. A further justification for the translation is offered in the words of St. Paul, I would rather have five words spoken in



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church that I understand and which can instruct others than ten thousand in a (foreign) tongue; (I Cor.14:19) and the example of St. Jerome is cited who is said to have had everyone, great and small, priests and laymen, in his country of Dalmatia pray only in the Dalmatian tongue! The final exhortation added to the second and third editions defends a few possibly controversial translations, and lashes out quite bitterly in some of the strongest criticism of opponents that Stapulensis ever seems to have penned, against those who would prevent folk reading and praying the psalms. The prefatory letter concludes with general exhortation to faith and confidence in Christ expressed in prayer, and seems to imply in words reminiscent of Hugh of St. Victor that Stapulensis would like only scriptural prayers to be used by Christians, though this is not explicit.<sup>(16)</sup>

The work, Epistres et Evangiles pour les Cinqantes et Deux Sepmaines de L'an is not dated nor explicitly attributed to Stapulensis. Noel Beda, however, the Syndic of the Sorbonne, attributed it to "Jacobus Faber and his disciples" in 1526, and there is reasonable ground for assuming that the edition which appeared from the press of Simon du Bois in 1525 was the first edition.<sup>(17)</sup> It is the earliest extant edition known, and later editions were modified or expanded by other hands than Stapulensis' (and possibly even without his consultation).<sup>(18)</sup> Only the 1525 edition is used here in an assessment of his views, and even this was not entirely his own production for there is evidence that at least four people worked on the book, a fact which must be taken into account in using it, though the views and attitudes discernible here are sufficiently close to those expressed in Stapulensis' other works to suggest that his was the dominant influence in this composition. The uncertainty of the precise date of its appearance allows for slight ambiguity about the motive for its production which must be deduced from the



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contemporary situation in Meaux. Between 1518 and 1521 Bishop Briçonnet reorganised the distribution and licensing of preachers in his diocese. This in itself may have revealed the need for some sort of aid to regular preaching; it also marked the beginning of an evangelical reform movement which might be expected to produce some such aid. The preachers brought in by Briçonnet included some who, in the judgement at least of their enemies, formed a close-knit group of would-be reformers.<sup>(19)</sup> If this work was envisaged before December 1523 it might have been merely intended as the instrument of such an evangelical reform.<sup>(20)</sup>

In the face of complaints about "new and pernicious doctrines" Briçonnet revoked all previous preaching licences in December 1523, and contemporary opinion asserts that the work under consideration was intended not for the reforming group of preachers, but for ignorant curates incapable of preaching without help.<sup>(21)</sup> If the revocation of December 1523 left many pulpits vacant there may well have been considerable need for such an aid to preaching. Produced by a group of four people the work may have appeared in a relatively short time, in 1525, and attracted criticism almost as soon as it appeared; comparison suggests that it was produced after the French New Testament.<sup>(22)</sup> While Briçonnet tightened up his procedure of granting preaching licences in the face of criticism, he did not immediately reverse all his cautious reform measures; possibly this work was part of that second stage of reform. Since Briçonnet's circle was continually menaced with accusations of heresy from August 1524 to November 1525, it seems impossible to decide whether this work was intended to provoke or to reassure the heresy hunters; the views it expresses are sufficiently ambiguous to have been condemned as "Lutheran" at the time, and subsequently to have been described as "anti-Lutheran".<sup>(23)</sup>



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On 16 November 1525 the Sorbonne extracted forty-eight propositions from the work for censure. These censures fall into two main categories; a number of propositions are seen as attacking devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints, the liturgical rites of the Church, the official text of the Vulgate and the doctrine of Purgatory. Since these were very similar to the accusations of heresy made against Briçonnet and his preachers during the preceding eighteen months they may indicate that the Sunday homilies in this work were at least reflected in contemporary preaching, even if the work never circulated sufficiently widely for it to be clear that these homilies were actually preached as they stood.<sup>(24)</sup> The practice of the Sorbonne in separating brief expressions of supposedly heretical, scandalous or erroneous doctrines from their context is not helpful in assessing their true significance as an indication of Stapulensis' own theological views. The same is true of the second category of propositions which the Sorbonne extracted and condemned as savouring of "Luthernaism", or as teaching a wholly Lutheran doctrine of sola scriptura or sola fide. The significance of these censures will appear more clearly in chapter 5.

In the dedicatory preface to the Latin Psalter addressed to Jean de Selve, President of the Parlement of Paris, and dated 1 May 1524, Stapulensis explains that he is addressing the whole Parlement through its head, and he subsequently emphasised in a letter to Farel on 6 July 1524 that his intention was to seek the favour and patronage of the Parlement, and not merely the approbation of the censor, in view of its recent censorship decree.<sup>(25)</sup> The burden of the letter is similar to that of the preface to the French Psalter: the psalter teaches us the correct way to pray in the manner which God wishes, and fosters silent, interior prayer which brings us into immediate contact with God. The psalms moreover teach us all the mysteries of Christ from his birth to his glorification. If we understood that it is the Spirit of



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God who prays in us so that we pray in spirit and in truth, how great an increase would there be of that faith without which it is impossible to please God.

The Christological reference of the psalms is defended at some length by extensive allusion to specific psalms quoted in various parts of the New Testament, and is taken for granted in the body of the work in virtually every psalm. The motive for the work was evidently a combination of the two aims dear to the heart of Stapulensis, a desire for the promulgation of accurate and intelligible texts and a revival of spiritual fervour stimulated by study of and meditation on the scriptures.<sup>(26)</sup>

After conventional compliments and greetings to Chancellor Antoine du Prat, the preface to the Commentary on the Catholic Epistles makes two main points: commentaries on these books, especially by the Fathers of the Church, are rare yet these portions of scripture are "truly canonical and contain a canon or rule for right living according to the spirit of true Christianity, and they are so close to the Gospel that they are contained under the name of Gospel".<sup>(27)</sup> Further, the free and unhindered preaching and dissemination of the word of God redounds to the honour and benefit of all kings and their kingdoms, and Stapulensis goes so far as to hope that Francis I (who had already shown himself favourable to the Meaux reformers)<sup>(28)</sup> would realise more and more how much he will merit the praise of posterity if he makes it his business to see that the Gospel is purely preached in all regions of his kingdom.

The approach and method of comment are substantially the same as in former works, but the need for royal protection is obvious since Stapulensis has again made his own Latin translation of the scriptural text, indicating by technical apparatus where he differs from the Vulgate.<sup>(29)</sup> A letter to the reader at the

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beginning of the work explains this procedure and alludes to the fact that the Greek text differs from the current Latin version which is not always fully intelligible. Such apparent criticism of the Vulgate is justified by quotation from the Prologus Septem Epistolarum Canonicarum, supposedly by St. Jerome, concerning corrupt translations.<sup>(30)</sup> The long gap between the date of the dedicatory letter, December 1524, and the appearance of the work from a press outside France, that of Andreas Cratander in Basle in 1527, is presumably explained by Stapulensis' flight to Strasbourg in 1525. He may have left the manuscript with Cratander when he visited Basle in May 1526.<sup>(31)</sup>

The previous chapter suggested that Stapulensis' favourite model when considering the nature of the Church was that of the body of Christ, and that he clearly understood this body to be both mystical and physical, a concept which owed much to his appreciation of the doctrine of the hypostatic union of two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ. The significance of this doctrine is again mentioned a number of times in the Gospel Commentary, together with emphasis on the reality of the incarnation which also appears in the Sunday Homilies.<sup>(32)</sup> "Christ, head and members, is the name of the Church", a concept which is explicit throughout the works under consideration.<sup>(33)</sup> Christ is the head of his body and we, the members of the Church, are the body of Christ. It is a mystical body which will only be complete with the final resurrection of all Christians, but the pleroma Christi still embraces all creation.<sup>(34)</sup>

Since Christians are the body of Christ they live, here and now on earth, by the Spirit of Christ.<sup>(35)</sup> Of necessity there is only one body of Christ and all the faithful are members of the same body. Though Christ's body is a mystical body, the Church on earth, with its sacramental and hierarchical structure, is truly part of the kingdom of God, and this earthly Church, "the Church militant" and the Church in heaven form only one single



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body.<sup>(36)</sup> The ordered variety of categories and functions proper to its nature are to be preserved without prejudice to its unity which will be built up by charity and concord among its members who must render each other mutual assistance and avoid all splits and divisions.<sup>(37)</sup> The Church is represented as the reign of Christ, prefigured by the reign of King David, throughout the Latin and French Psalters, and considered as the house and home of those who believe, outside which there is no salvation.<sup>(38)</sup> Since union with God in Christ is the source of salvation, there can be only one true religion of Christ, one Church, one faith. Division in the Church is caused by evil spirits while unity is a divine gift, and members of the Church should strive to preserve and foster it.<sup>(39)</sup> The same point is further inculcated in connection with the use of the metaphor of the sheepfold (Jn.10), and allegorically applied to Peter's boat from which Christ himself in person taught on occasion.<sup>(40)</sup> An interesting development of it appears with reference to the parable of the mustard seed where Stapulensis tells us that the tree is the universal Church while the branches are particular churches (Matt. 13:132).

The general assumption that the Church has a hierarchical structure of ordained ministers is present in these later works, and occasionally referred to. All such ministers are Christ's vicars exercising his authority over his people, to absolve or retain sin and to lay down the rite for this, to preside at the liturgy, to administer the sacraments; to preach and to instruct and admonish the people.<sup>(41)</sup> Stapulensis still shows himself well aware of abuse and corruption among the clergy; nevertheless right order must be preserved and none should judge others unless authorised to do so by a superior authority.<sup>(42)</sup> These later works contain clearer and more frequent allusion to the papacy. The historical figure of Peter in the Gospels represents Christ's vicar now and the title "vicar of Christ" is used in a manner which takes this for granted.<sup>(43)</sup> The house of Peter and the ship of Peter are



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the Church, and Peter's role as chief shepherd is to teach all members of the Church sound doctrine on a level suited to their abilities and the stage of their progress conceived on the threefold Dionisian pattern.<sup>(44)</sup>

Some discussion of the nature of the papacy, or rather of the precise relationship of the papacy to Christ and to the Church, arises out of comment on the word "rock". A careful distinction is made between Peter's weakness and powerlessness in himself, and his firmness and strength in association with Christ. The Lord founded his Church on the unshakeable strength of the rock of Peter's confession of faith which itself came from God. Peter is not himself the rock, as is proved by his being called "Satan" shortly after the incident of his confession of faith. It is Christ himself, the Word of God, who is the rock. Peter is so called from the word "rock" (petra), in the same way that the word "Christian" is derived from Christ. Christ promised Peter the keys with which to bind and loose. These are the keys of faith so that whatever Peter hands on, as coming from Christ, to be believed is to be believed; whatever he orders to be done is to be done, and these things, bound on earth, are also bound in heaven. Whatever he says is not to be believed or not to be done is loosed on earth and also in heaven. However these keys of faith for binding and loosing are not Peter's own, but Christ's; Christ said "I will give to you the keys ...". Peter therefore does not bind and loose according to his own will but according to the will of Christ, the supremely good will that can never err. In the remarks which follow this passage Stapulensis virtually confines the power of binding and loosing to the teaching of correct doctrine, and it would seem that he does regard teaching as the supreme function of the papacy.<sup>(45)</sup> In the present context correct doctrine is epitomised as the confession of the divinity of Jesus, since this is what many heretics denied after his passion (though he mentions Menander, Stapulensis is again thinking chiefly



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of "the Arab sect"), and this confession is the supreme key of faith which enables us to achieve eternal life.<sup>(46)</sup>

The whole process of how a person becomes a member of the body of Christ is succinctly summarised on the familiar threefold pattern in the Latin Psalter:

Entry into the Church is by the sacrament of baptism; growth and education (catechesis) is by means of the Eucharist; consummation comes with instruction in the word of God and evangelical doctrine. (LPs.147:1).

Baptism is the normal mode of initiation into the Christian life and only the baptised can enter heaven. The formula and ceremonial of baptism are explicitly referred to, and much of the same terminology reappears in these works as was found in the earlier commentaries.<sup>(47)</sup> We "put on Christ", we are "united" to him and "incorporated in him" ; we enjoy "filiation in the Son of God", "participate in his priesthood", unite ourselves to him by faith while he unites himself to us by love in such a way that the lover and the beloved are made one.<sup>(48)</sup> Christian baptism is illustrated by comparison with Old Testament figures, the ark of Noah and the crossing of the Red Sea, and contrasted with that of John the Baptist, since Christ is now the real agent of baptism. It derives its efficacy from his own baptism, for Christians are truly washed in the blood and water from his crucified side.<sup>(49)</sup>

The effects of baptism include the removal of original sin, rendering men whiter than wool and like to burning coals since they are illuminated and given faith. Satan and the powers of evil are restrained and repressed. Baptism is the womb of the Church's fertility.<sup>(50)</sup>

Anointed and vivified by the Holy Spirit who infuses his graces and gifts the baptised are forgiven, justified and sanctified and become "Christiform".<sup>(51)</sup> While baptism has the power to cast out evil spirits it does not wholly eradicate concupiscence; since we can be baptised only once the sacrament of reconciliation is a necessary part of the Church's life.<sup>(52)</sup> Prayer alone is not sufficient for the forgiveness even of lesser sins without the



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practice of the Church's rite of reconciliation, the whole of which is necessary for the legitimate justification of the sinner. This rite is in accordance with the Gospel, and though the sinner is forgiven as soon as he repents in his heart, God nevertheless wishes him to confess to the priests of the Church. Though the absolution pronounced by the Church is only a sign of the forgiveness granted by God, the apostles were given power and authority by God to judge and discern, in accordance with the scriptures, what is "leprosy" and what is not, and to absolve men from it, as did St. Paul at Corinth.<sup>(53)</sup>

The bread and wine of the Eucharist are Christ's own oblation, the memorial of his one, all-sufficient sacrifice, instituted as a sacrament to last until the end of the world.<sup>(54)</sup> By means of the Eucharist, Christ is present both in heaven and on earth; what he did on earth he does now in heaven. Christ in the Eucharist is the true manna from heaven, heavenly food for dwellers on earth; here we have not shadow but reality for the bread and wine are the true body and blood of Christ, present now in the sacramental mode and so both passible and impassible.<sup>(55)</sup> Reception of this sacrament is the consummation of faith and baptism and we communicate with Christ by eating his body and drinking his blood in the literal consumption of the bread and wine, even though true eating is by faith.<sup>(56)</sup> Stapulensis continues to accept the practice of reserving the consecrated species and of adoring these.<sup>(57)</sup> Through this inebriating food the recipient is renewed, made one body and one spirit with Christ, and so brought into union with God.<sup>(58)</sup>

The intimacy of the union of Christ with his Church and with the individual soul is still characterised by the marriage metaphor,<sup>(59)</sup> and it is Christ who prays in the Church and in the Christian for he was incarnated so that he might become the spouse of human nature.<sup>(60)</sup> The purpose of this espousal is of course salvation since Christ died for his spouse, was wounded and wedded to her



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on the cross, and washes her clean in his own blood.<sup>(61)</sup> The Holy Spirit is the bond between the spouses making the Church a virgin bride who is also a fruitful mother begetting children by the Holy Spirit in uncorrupted faith, mother of both Jew and Gentile. He who would have God (or Christ) for his father must have the Church as his mother, and the process by which the Church brings us to birth lasts as long as we are in this world.<sup>(62)</sup> The effects of this union are justification (Sunday Homilies, passim) the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance of eternal life.<sup>(63)</sup> The sacraments do not however provide an automatic guarantee of these results; baptism, the name of Christian, even the reception of the body of Christ in the Eucharist, will not avail without patience, piety, fraternal charity, and the fruit of the works of hope and of the Spirit. The Eucharist moreover must be received with reverence, purity and faith.<sup>(64)</sup> The word "sacrament" is still used with the same wide range of meaning that was to be found in the earlier commentaries. It refers to the mysteries of God which have not been revealed to men, to those which have been revealed, especially God's plan for man's salvation, and the signs by which they are revealed; it is used in general of the sacraments of the Church, of the mode in which Christ is present therein and of the ministrations of the clergy in this connection. It designates specifically the sacraments of baptism, the Eucharist and reconciliation.<sup>(65)</sup>

Stapulensis' own characteristic concept of salvation as "christiformity" reappears throughout these later works, and some particular applications of it are of interest. The regeneration of the Christian born of the virgin Church is the "christiform sacrament" of Christ's own incarnation.<sup>(66)</sup> The Church is the city set on a hilltop and those who live there live by the Spirit of Christ, not by their own spirit, nor that of the world or the flesh; a city that thus lives "so to speak christiformly" cannot be hid.<sup>(67)</sup> The good and gentle masters whom slaves



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should find it less difficult to obey are those who are like the Lord, "faithful, spiritual and in some way christiform".<sup>(68)</sup> Children taught to imitate Christ are said to be taught a "deiform life", but the process of becoming christiform is not merely a matter of imitation by human effort. Christians, the royal priesthood, the consecrated nation, have received an anointing of the Holy Spirit to make them christiform. The love which is to distinguish the disciples of Christ is only possible to those who have been taught of God; such teaching however is the infusion not merely of light, which is "bare knowledge", but of the "heat of light which is christiformity and the burning assimilation to Christ" (inflammata Christi assimilatio).<sup>(69)</sup> The process however will not be complete before the final resurrection. God wills us to imitate his Son in suffering hardships while here on earth; when we leave the prison of this world, translated with him into his kingdom of light we will be made christiform, where even our godly fear will be purified and made "coelestiform". Christ will come again first at the death of each of his elect and then on the last day; then they will be taken up, body and soul, into his kingdom where each will receive beatitude according to his capacity, and will "go forth christiform".<sup>(70)</sup> Other uses of the particle - forma occur. The children of God can be distinguished from those of the devil because the life and will of the former are conformed to the divine life and will, while the children of the devil are "evil, horrid, dark and unformed" (informis). To be truly able to recite the creed, truly to profess our faith we must have a perfect, living faith "informed" (informata) by the Spirit of Christ and by charity. In heaven our inward eye will always be freely turned towards those things which will make it lightesome (luciformibus).<sup>(71)</sup> The notion of Christ as the exemplar and the Christian as the reflection or copy occurs more than once:



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Be ye perfect: we can be perfect not of ourselves but only by the gift of his grace, only by imitation. He is perfect by virtue of being the original and highest truth. (Perfectus est veritate et summa quidem veritate). We are perfect by faith for faith is an imitation of the highest truth. (Matt.5:47).

Christ is the truth; faith is an image of the truth. The closer its similarity to the truth of Christ the greater its power. (Matt.21:202).

Christ washed the feet of his disciples and in all reality washes those who come to him; we can only wash one another's feet in imitation, for he truly washes and purges our thoughts and affections. He perfects and brings to completion not only the ritual washings of the Old Law but indeed all things, for he is the original of *all* exemplars (quippe cum in se fit exemplarium idea).

It is clear that Stapulensis' views as expressed in the works of the period 1522 to 1527 are entirely consistent with those discerned in the first two scripture commentaries from the period 1509 to 1512. In view of the ten-year gap separating these two groups of writings however, it would not be surprising to find some change of outlook or attitude stimulated both by events in his own life and in that of Europe and the Church at large. It is possible to trace a change of emphasis on a number of points which might be loosely interpreted as a move in a "Reformation" direction. This change of emphasis will be examined in the following chapter.

## Chapter 4 FOOTNOTES

- (1) See above chapter 2, appendix II.
- (2) The second edition of the Gospel Commentary, 1523 (Ushaw College Library, Durham) has been chiefly used, with some reference to the first edition, 1522 (British Library, London). The first edition of the French New Testament, 1523 (British Library, London) has been chiefly used. A facsimile reprint of this has been published, ed. M.A. Screech (Wakefield, 1970). The fourth edition of the French Psalter, 1531 (British Library, London) has been used.
- (3) For a discussion of the dating and authorship of this work see M.A. Screech, Epistres et Evangiles pour les Cinquante et Deux Sepmaines de L'An, facsimile de la première édition Simon Du Bois, avec introduction, note bibliographique et appendices (Geneva, 1964); also Guy Bédouelle and Franco Giaccone, Epistres et Evangiles pour les Cinquante et Deux Dimanches de L'An, texte de l'édition Pierre de Vingle, édition critique avec introduction et notes (Brill, 1976).
- (4) The 1524 edition of the Latin Psalter (Trinity College, Cambridge) has been used. The first edition, 1527, of the Commentary on the Catholic Epistles (British Library, London) and that printed in Cologne in 1570 (Durham University Library) have been used.
- (5) Cf. chapter 1 above.
- (6) See above, chapter 1, note (140).
- (7) A letter from George Civis, Louvain, 12 Dec. 1514, to Josse Clichtove listed five passages where Stapulensis' correction of the Vulgate was open to criticism, but it seems that such criticism at that stage did not lead to the same sort of trouble as Stapulensis was later to experience. See J.P. Massaut, Critique et Tradition à la Veille de la Réforme en France (Paris, 1974) pp.47-59.
- (8) Cf. chapter 6 below, notes (3) and (4).
- (9) Apparently an allusion to Pseudo-Dionisius, De Divinis Nominibus, ch.7 : "  $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\iota\alpha$   $\sigma\phi\omega\delta\alpha\varsigma$   $\psi\pi\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\iota\chi\eta\nu$  "; Migne P.G.III, 865, translates "...omnis sapientiae procreatrix ...".
- (10) The expression of ideas closely resembles that to be found in Hugh of St. Victor, Quaestiones in Epistolas Pauli, in Ep.II ad Cor.q.XVII. Stapulensis had some interest in the Victorine school, see above, chapter 2, appendix II.



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- (11) See above, chapter 1, note (127).
- (12) St. John Chrysostom, In Joannem, Homilia XI.
- (13) See above, chapter 1, note (139).
- (14) Cf. chapter 2 above.
- (15) See above, chapter 2, appendix II.
- (16) It has been suggested that Stapulensis is again echoing Hugh of St. Victor here, but I have been unable to trace the supposed reference: see Imbart:Les Origines, III, p.139.
- (17) Critical information about the work Epistres et Evangiles pour les Cinquantes et Deux Sepmaines de L'An (hereafter briefly referred to as Sunday Homilies) is taken from the facsimile edition edited by M.A. Screech (Geneva, 1964) and that edited by Guy Bédouelle and Franco Giaccone (Brill, 1976). The earliest extant edition of the work is unsigned and undated, but it was attributed to "Jacobus Faber et discipuli ejus" by Noel Beda, Annotaciones (Paris, 1526) fo..CXIX<sup>o</sup>, and a decree of the Paris Parlement on 14 February 1543 condemning the work made the same explicit attribution. The edition has been identified typographically as coming from the press of Simon Du Bois and was first censured by the Sorbonne on 6 November 1525. The fact that the pagination of the Sorbonne's edition which it describes as Librum sic inscriptum 'Epistolae et Evangelia ad usum Diocesis Meldensis' differs from that of Simon Du Bois has lent support to the suggestion either that the Sorbonne worked on proofs and not the published edition, or that an earlier edition of the work was published in 1523. This date for the work is given in two sixteenth century catalogues of books condemned by the Sorbonne, and is commonly thought to be a mistake arising from confusion with the 1523 translation of the New Testament into French. Remarks in Stapulensis' letter to Farel in July 1524 (Herminjard I, No. 103, pp.219-227) would seem to imply that the work in question had not then been printed. Sunday Homilies is not substantially different in form from previous collections of postils on the Sunday scripture readings already published in French, e.g. Pierre Desrey, Postilles et Expositions des Epistres et Evangiles Dominicales (Troyes, 1492). Whether the content is significantly different from previous works of the same genre is a matter for debate. It is noteworthy that Luther's Adventspostille appeared in 1522. Stapulensis' remarks in the letter already referred to would suggest that his book was intended for the use of ignorant clerics in parishes, and the same point is made by Jean Lermite, secretary to Bishop Briçonnet; see Bretonneau: L'Histoire Généalogique, p.168.



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- (18) A second edition printed by Simon Du Bois between 1530 and 1535 exhibits alterations and emendations which could be considered merely as corrections, and cross-references intended to avoid unnecessary duplications in printing. It is possible that Stapulensis might have been involved in such a revision; see below, chapter 6, concerning the last years of his life. The edition printed by Pierre de Vingle, probably at Lyons between 1530 and 1532, exhibits extensive alteration, with whole passages omitted and replaced by material often quite distinct in tone. The edition printed in Lyons, 3 May 1542, was substantially re-edited by Etienne Dolet, with considerable additional material and prefaced by an Epistre au Lecteur Chretien. For discussion of this, see Lucien Febvre, Dolet Propagateur de l'Evangile, in Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, VI (1945) pp.115-6.
- (19) See above chapter 1, note (123).
- (20) Cf. note (18) above.
- (21) Cf. note (17) above.
- (22) See the coincidence of comment and sentiment indicated in the discussion of themes in the later part of this chapter. The lectionary used is that of the diocese of Meaux according to the table of Sunday epistles and gospels given in the back of the French New Testament, which notes the variations between the lectionaries of Meaux, Paris and Rome.
- (23) For a discussion of the charge of Lutheranism see R.M. Cameron, The Charges of Lutheranism brought against Jacques Lefèvre D'Etaples, 1520-29, in Harvard Theological Review, 63 (1970) pp.119-149; also Screech, *op. cit.* pp.16-18. For the anti-Lutheran claim see Imbart:Les Origines, III, p.131-149
- (24) Cf. note (18) above.
- (25) See above, chapter 1, note (136); also Herminjard I, No. 103, pp.219-227.
- (26) Stapulensis' remarks in the letter referred to in the previous note seem to indicate that he might not have pursued his own work on the Latin Psalter, printed in May 1524, if he had not already put it into the hands of Jean de Selve by the time he received a copy of the work of Pomeranus: Joannis Pomerani Bugenhagii in Librum Psalmorum Interpretatio, Wittenbergae publice lecta (Basle, March 1524). Herminjard, I, p.223, note 21, mistakenly applies Stapulensis' remarks to his French edition of the Psalter.
- (27) Cf. chapter 5 below.



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- (28) See above, chapter 1, notes (140) and (144).
- (29) See above, chapter 2.
- (30) For details of this work see Rice:Prefatory Epistles, p.485, note 2, where bibliographical references are given.
- (31) See above, chapter 1, note (84). Rice:Prefatory Epistles, p.486, misprints the date as 1525.
- (32) Matt.1:7, Mk.4:25, 15:90, Jn.14:109; Sunday Homilies 20th Sunday after Pentecost, on Matt.22. (References to the Sunday Homilies hereafter abbreviated to the indication of the Sunday or feast in the liturgical calendar, and the epistle or gospel passage which is the subject of the homily).
- (33) Latin Psalter, Ps.47:1 (References hereafter abbreviated to Latin Psalter : LPs., French Psalter : FPs.)
- (34) Lk.9:86, 21:164, Jn.11:92, 14:109, 15:114, FPs.69, 96, LPs.6,15,19,25,26,37,58,68,141, Sunday Hom. Oct. Epiph.Rom.12,4 Pent.Rom.8, 10 Pent.I Cor.12, 17 Pent.Eph.4, 19 Pent.Eph.4.
- (35) Lk.8:75, 21:164, LPs.25:11, Sunday Hom.17 Pent. Eph.4.
- (36) Matt.13:131, Lk.5:52, 21:164, Jn.1:14, 14:109, LPs.149:1, Sunday Hom.4 Oct.Epiph.Matt.13, 17 Pent. Eph. 4.
- (37) Lk.3:38, 21:164, LPs.132:1, Sunday Hom.Oct.Epiph. Rom.12.
- (38) Matt.8:74, 13:135, Mk.8:37, Lk.6:73, 8:75, 15:136, Jn.1:14, LPs.106:7, II Pet.3:17, Sunday Hom.13 Pent. Lk.10.
- (39) Matt.1:4, 27:272, Lk.3:38, 5:52, Jn.4:31, Sunday Hom. 2 Easter. Jn.10. The relevant passage in this homily: "...Le bon pasteur ...a le universel troupeau lequel de jour en jour il amaine...jusques a tant que tout le monde ne sera que ung troupeau..." is one of those that has been deleted in the later editions of the work and replaced by a long paragraph concerning the need for faith, the obligation to defend the sheep against false prophets by the preaching of evangelical doctrine.
- (40) Matt.8:77, 13:127, Lk.5:52, Jn.6:50, 21:149, Sunday Hom. 3 Oct.Epiph.Matt.8. The relevant passage in this homily is extended, but in the same sense, in the later editions of the work.
- (41) Matt.6:53, 8:74, 18:178, 26:253, Mk.13:78, 15:94, Lk. 17:144, Jn.21:149, LPs.44:10, 67:13-14, 71:16,

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- I Pet.2:9, 5:33, I Jn.5:89, III Jn.5, Sunday Hom. Quasimodo. Jn.20.
- (42) Matt.7:61, 10:89, LPs.72:16-20, I Pet.5:33, Sunday Hom. Sunday Oct.Christmas.Lk.2, 19 Pent.Eph.4.
- (43) Matt.8:74, 14:146, Mk.13:78, Lk.10:106, 22:174.
- (44) Mk.2:9, Lk.5:52, Jn.21:150.
- (45) The letter addressed to Alfonso of Aragon, Archbishop of Saragossa, 25 Dec.1516, prefacing two works of Ramon Lull, (see above, chapter 2, appendix II), would seem to uphold the teaching authority of the pope: "...At quoties audivimus inclytam illam Romam auctoritate pontificia adversus malevolos calumniatores haec opera defendisse, probasse, roborasse? Quo modo igitur possent nostri non approbare quae sciunt a capite fidei fuisse approbata ?...". The Magdalen pamphlets make similar protestations of loyalty to the authority of the pope in matters of faith, cf. above chapter 1, note (39).
- (46) Matt.16:158, Jn.2:15.
- (47) Matt.1:3, 3:17, 12:124, Jn.3:22, LPs.23:1, 59:6, 64:10, 86:4, II Pet.3:17, I Jn.2:22.
- (48) Matt.6:59, 13:137, Jn.15:114, I Pet.2:11, I Jn 4:71.
- (49) Matt.3:22, Lk.12:117, Jn.3:28, II Pet.1:4, 3:17, Sunday Hom.4 Adv.Jn.1. Septuages.I Cor.9-10.
- (50) LPs.44:10, 50:7, 50:20, 73:14, 126:4, I Pet.2:9, II Pet.1:4, I Jn.4:71.
- (51) Matt.1:5, 3:22, 18:173, Mk.16:104, Lk.8:75, Jn.2:19, 3:22, Jn.13:106, 14:107, I Pet.2:11, I Jn.2:25, 3:29-30.
- (52) Matt.12:124, Jn.3:22, LPs. 73 :14, Sunday Hom.4 Oct. Epiph. Col.3.
- (53) Matt.6:53, 8:72, 18:178, Lk.17:144, LPs.49:6, Sunday Hom. Quasimodo.Jn.20, 14 Pent.Lk.17.
- (54) Matt.25:247, 27:271, Mk.14:83, Lk.2:25, 22:171, Jn.6:54, 13:101, LPs.4:8, 64:10, I Jn.5:94.
- (55) Matt.26:247, 27:271, Mk.14:83, Lk.2:25, 21:164, 22:171, Jn.6:54-5, 11:93, 13:101-2, 20:146, LPs. 71:16, Jas.5:33, Sunday Hom.Trinity.I Jn.4.
- (56) Matt.6:5, 26:247, Jas.5:33, Jn.6:51-55,13:101-2, Sunday Hom. Trinity.I Jn.4.
- (57) Lk.2:25, 21:164, Jn.6:54, I Jn.5:94.



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- (58) Matt.6:50, 26:247, Mk.14:83, Lk.21:164, Jn.6:55, LPs.21:28, 110:4, 131:16, Jas.5:33, I Jn.5:94, Sunday Hom. Trinity I Jn.4.
- (59) Matt.5:42, LPs.18:5, 21:20, 44:11, Sunday Hom. I Oct.Epiph. Jn.2, 19 Pent.Eph.4, 20 Pent.Matt.22.
- (60) Jn.2:18, LPs.21:27, Sunday Hom.20 Pent.Matt.22. It would seem that this passage from the Sunday Homilies could be a direct allusion to Luther, Liber de Christiana Libertate: "...Car comme nous disons, qui epouse la femme, il epouse les debtes, et est tenu de les payer et acquiter, pareillement Jesuchrist epousant noz ames, s'est voulu faire debteur et payeur de tous noz pechez et debtes..."
- (61) Matt.1:5, Lk.12:117, 14:129, Sunday Hom. 1 Oct. Epiph.Jn.2.
- (62) Matt.1:3, Jn.3:22, 16:121, I Pet.2:16, Sunday Hom. 16 Pent. Lk.7.
- (63) Mk.16:104, Jn.6:52, 13:102, LPs.16:17, 110:3, FPs. 36, 103, Sunday Hom.1 Adv. Matt.21, Septuag.I Cor.9-10, 2 Pent.Lk.24.
- (64) Matt.26:247, Mk.14:83, Lk.22:170, Jn.6:55, 11:93, 13:102, II Pet.1:5, I Jn.2:7, Sunday Hom. Septuag.I Cor.9-10 & Matt.20, Trinity I Jn.4.
- (65) Cf. chapter 3 note (13) above. See Matt.1:5, 1:7, 6:30, 13:127, Mk.8:41, Lk.24:204, Jn.2:19, 3:22, 6:55, Sunday Hom.Purif. Lk.2.
- (66) Matt.1:5.
- (67) Lk.8:75.
- (68) I Pet.2.20.
- (69) Matt.18:173, Jn.13:106.
- (70) Jn.14:107, I Pet.2:17, I Jn.3:29-30.
- (71) I Jn.2:8, I Jn.2:19, I Jn.3:40.
- (72) Jn.13:102.

Chapter 5: The change of emphasis discernible in Stapulensis' later views.

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Comparison of the two groups of Stapulensis' scriptural works discussed in chapters 3 and 4 reveals some change of emphasis in his outlook. The reform he desired was a revitalisation of mechanical and formalistic religious practice:

What does it mean, to fulfil the law? It is to work from faith through charity. Now faith is not concerned with externals, but with the living law of God in the depths of our hearts, written there by the spirit of faith, and this law is fulfilled by waiting on God through charity. (Jas.2:14).

Faith as he understood it should be a more living force in people's lives, an ideal he had expressed as early as 1509,<sup>(1)</sup> but this concept now seems to occupy a more central position in his teaching.<sup>(2)</sup>

Ignorance of God is the subversion of the world, the persecution of the good and the loss of souls; in a word it is all error and confusion and this is called unbelief (infidelitas). On the other hand knowledge of God is the upbuilding of the world, peace for the good and the salvation of souls. In sum it is all truth and glory, and this is called faith (fides). (Jn. 15:117).

His instrument for this reform was to be the more constant and urgent preaching of evangelical doctrine by all who were capable of it:

How can simple folk in whom Christ's word does not abide, who do not know the Gospel and what Christ has commanded, remain in Him? Therefore those who do abide in Christ and who have the word of God abiding in themselves, should with great confidence (fiducia) enlighten others, so that all may abide in Christ and understand his word, because he will give them whatever they ask for the edification of others. (Jn.15:115).

Nor can the Church, of herself or by her own efforts, bring about such a reform; she would sleep on unless awoken by the kindness of Christ himself, who went to his death precisely to give life to the Church (Matt.26: 252).



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In comment on the incident on the road to Emmaus (Lk.24) Stapulensis gives some indication of what should be the content of such evangelical preaching, dwelling particularly on the need for a correct understanding of penance (metanoia) as a change of heart, on the remission of sins by God's mercy and not by our own penitence, and on the need for faith in the effect of the one, all-sufficient sacrifice offered by Christ on the cross. While it is clear that he shared the concern of other sixteenth century reformers that the faithful should actually read the scriptures in the vernacular for themselves, it seems that for him the words "Gospel", "true doctrine", "evangelical doctrine" designated not so much the content of the written scriptures, as the mystical attitude and approach to them which characterised his own life. The word of God that he contemplated in the scripture was indeed Christ himself rather than the written account of Christ's life.<sup>(3)</sup> What is to be sought therefore, and what Christ infused into the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, is not a human understanding of the Gospel but "a divine understanding which contains the sacrament of all life and salvation" (Lk. 24:204). Moreover such a right understanding in the light of faith is "a sacrament which enables us to understand with the use of few words".<sup>(4)</sup> The centrality of faith in Stapulensis' outlook harmonises with his concept of docta ignorantia, the theme of Nicolas of Cusa which had so much appealed to him.<sup>(5)</sup> "The understanding of scripture is of like nature with the faith of Christ; neither can be obtained except by divine gift and the infusion of light from above". (Jn.19:140).

The contrast between human doctrines and evangelical doctrine finds frequent treatment in these later works. The former are the methods and conclusions characteristic of scholastic theology:

Such great things are above the grasp of the human mind, but faith can worship God more magnificiently in silence, by contemplating God with wonder (admirando) through apophatic theology, and by



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holding divine ignorance to be more powerful than knowledge. Knowledge is expressed in speech and praises God in hypophatic theology, but it does not know what it is saying. If it did grasp and understand that of which it spoke that thing would not be God, for he is incomprehensible and beyond our understanding. (Jn.16:120).

Matthew, Mark...and the other apostles should not be called several masters but one master, one doctor, because of the unity of their doctrine, a doctor produced not by the schools of men but by the Holy Spirit. (Jas.3:17).

Stapulensis' encouragement of general scripture reading evidently presumes that the well-disposed reader can discern evangelical doctrine for himself, even though he is not to presume on his own ability.<sup>(6)</sup> The Spirit of God present to him will enable him to understand the true meaning of what he reads, and among the gifts of the Holy Spirit that of enlightenment is the one to which Stapulensis most frequently recurs:

He is well described as the Father of Lights because he is the Father of that great and incomprehensible light, Jesus Christ. It is he who gives us the Holy Spirit and all the gifts and lights of the Holy Spirit. (Sunday Hom.4 Pasch. Jas.1).

The Spirit of God inspires the minds of the elect just as the demon inspires the souls of the lost (I Jn.4:54).<sup>(7)</sup> The theme of inspiration by the Holy Spirit receives some development: the apostles were the instrument of the Holy Spirit, acted upon like the strings of a harp (Matt. 10:95). Those who are acted upon, unless they also have the gift of knowing whence this comes, think they are acting themselves, and in this are deluded, for there is as much difference between acting and being acted upon as between flesh and spirit, between the animal, rational man and the spiritual man. When men act, and act well, they are to be approved, but much more blessed are those who are acted upon even if they never act of themselves. It is better for man to act as an instrument than as a cause, more desirable for him always to be an instrument than the master and cause of his own actions, for whatever



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good he might himself achieve is only earthly and human, while the good flowing from his role as instrument is divine and heavenly. The one is taught by the philosophers, the other by the wisdom of God; our actions do not attain to faith but passivity does achieve it. The sacred scriptures and especially the New Testament have an affinity not with those who are active, but with those who are passive, and those who are passive, who are acted upon, have an affinity with the scriptures (Jn.11:89). The Holy Spirit is the movement, life and leader of the whole Catholic Church (Sunday Hom.17 Pent.Eph.4) and St. John writes to "the faithful who have received the unction of the Holy Spirit" in contrast with those who have apostatised, for "those runaways, although they had received an exterior cleansing, knew nothing of an interior one, which is the unction of the Holy Spirit, and did not bring to baptism a vessel fit for the reception of it" (I Jn.2:22).

Stapulensis evidently deplored the restriction of scriptural study and interpretation to a clerical elite, and the spiritual starvation of the ordinary faithful which encouraged the growth of distorted and unscriptural customs, institutions and devotions; but his increased emphasis on the need for dissemination of "evangelical doctrine" has a positive rather than a negative tone. He is less concerned with the correction of abuses than with an appreciation of the value and riches of mystical prayer developed by meditation on the scriptures. It is the vocation of the Church throughout the world to abandon the world and the prince of this world, and to follow Christ her king. (LPs.44:12). Prayer and praise in the silence and secrecy of the heart are fitting for the Church of Christ (LPs.64:1), and Stapulensis employs more than once an extended version of the comparison between Martha and Mary:

The house of Martha symbolises the Church, Mary the contemplative life and Martha the active. (8) Those who live in the leisure of contemplation should depend on God alone, sitting at his feet. This



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symbolises stability and profound humility; they should live by every word that comes from the mouth of God...both ways of life are good, both give hospitality to the Lord, but the contemplative is better than the active... Why shall the better part not be taken away from her? Because contemplation has no end in the life to come, for it is the life of the blessed which we begin here, and in which we grow and progress, but it is not perfected here in this life, but consummated in the other. The active life on the other hand, begun here, progresses and has its end here in this life. (Lk.10:96).

If the Church is to live by every word that comes from the mouth of God evangelical doctrine must be much more widely preached, a theme to which Stapulensis often returns in these later works. In the story of the feeding of the five thousand, evening signifies the decline of doctrine, the desert-place the world lacking life-giving doctrine, and the advanced hour the lack of the day and light of doctrine (Matt.14:145), and the same interpretation of the crowds hungry for doctrine appears elsewhere.<sup>(9)</sup> The point is further elaborated in connection with Christ's conversation with the Samaritan woman; the water of heretical and schismatic doctrine does not satisfy but leaves man perpetually tortured by thirst, but the man who drinks the unclouded water of true doctrine will be satisfied not from an external source but from the fountain of eternal life (Jn.4:32). So the nations of Stapulensis' own day have this same need for doctrine although they are often unaware of it. "We should be concerned and greatly rejoice when we hear that others have received the word of God, the evangelical word - it has been hidden for such a long time" (Sunday Hom.Tues.post Pent.Acts 8). The keys of the kingdom confided to Peter are the keys "of the doctrine of the faith, the doctrine of Christ, and the word of God" contrasted with the "key of knowledge taken away by the doctors of the law" (Matt.16:158) and it is urgent that the word of the Lord, Go and preach the Gospel to every creature, should be fulfilled "to the men of our day who have so little sense of that unction from the Holy Spirit, or even of that exterior anointing which is the sign of



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the living, internal unction of the Holy Spirit" (I Jn.2:25). All Christians should sigh and pray continually that their country might be filled with the Holy Spirit and knowledge of the will of God, that all might bear fruit, and grow in the knowledge and understanding of his word (Sunday Hom.24 Pent.Col.1).<sup>(10)</sup> Among the faithful there are three grades, and each one has its own unction from the Spirit, least firmly rooted in the beginners (not from the nature of the unction but from the weakness of their capacity) more strongly so in the proficient, and most firmly rooted in the perfect; "nowadays we have few beginners, fewer proficient and still fewer perfect" (I Jn.2:25).

The doctrine preached must however be true doctrine if it is to stimulate, nourish and save those at present starved for lack of it. The villages roundabout, to which the apostles wished to dismiss the hungry five thousand, are the institutions of human learning (gymnasia humanarum traditionum) in which alien doctrines and not the nourishment of grace are acquired (Matt.14:145). As at Cana, the wine of pure doctrine has failed; Christians must pray that the cold water of impure or human doctrines, the slightness of charity and the poor understanding of the scriptures may be ripened into the wine of spiritual doctrine without the admixture of the water of the human sense (Sunday Hom.post Oct. Epiph.Jn.2).<sup>(11)</sup> Evangelical doctrine is the pasture to which the Good Shepherd leads his sheep, so that their souls, nourished and fattened, may rise to a higher state and become capable of exulting in the praise of God.<sup>(12)</sup> There is only one shepherd of the whole flock; other ministers of his are, so to speak, sub-shepherds. Strangers who are not true shepherds, are firstly heretics and infidels who teach dogmas contrary to the doctrines of the true shepherd, and secondly those who teach the doctrines of men in place of those of the true shepherd even though they seem to contain piety and religion (Jn.10:81).



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The world throws up many varied doctrines which are not the word of God, the doctrine of Christ or the Gospel, but either teachings dictated by the human spirit, and therefore vain....or doctrines of the evil spirit, the teachings of error and heresy. Those who sow them, perverting and misinterpreting the scriptures of God, are false prophets. The doctrine of the scriptures is solid and life-giving, teaching the truth; the doctrines of false prophets, or heretics, are unreliable, death-dealing, error and lies. (I Jn.4:54).

Heresy and "impiety" seem to be synonymous, for the "impious" are those who pervert the Gospel according to their own sense for pleasure, ambition or gain; seeking to further their own avarice they blaspheme the word of God, vilifying and execrating it without any fear of his terrible judgements (II Pet.2:12). Heretics now also include those who do not live according to the Gospel and the Spirit of Christ, but "according to the flesh, or the spirit of Satan" and "these antichrists stand for others in the future" whether it be the Mahomedans or any other sort of sect (I Jn.2:22).<sup>(13)</sup> Human doctrines derived from a literary or humanist education (literaria institutione) hold an intermediate place, being neither wholly good nor wholly bad, since while they do not bring death neither do they bring life (I Jn.4:54). Truly saving doctrine is however essentially supernatural; the Gospel is the fulfilment of the Father's legatine commission (legationis Patris impletio). It is the word of the Son as the one sent, and of the Father as the one who sends (Jn.5:40), and the coming of Christ into our world has purified even the scriptures themselves which had been contaminated and corrupted by the human constitutions and ordinances of the Scribes and Pharisees (Sunday Hom.Purif.Mal.3).

The appropriate response to the preaching of evangelical doctrine is faith, always associated for Stapulensis with hope and charity:

Good soil will at last bring forth fruit...at first the blade which arises from the word of God which has been received...Infused into our minds it first of all purges, then illuminates and soon brings to



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perfection and consummation. The Father purges, the Son illuminates, and the Spirit brings to perfection ... Hope purges, faith illuminates and charity perfects and consummates. (Mk.4:23).

Such faith, and the knowledge which it brings, is a gift of God, in no way the result of human effort: "The faith which perfects comes down from above, the most holy Jesus inhabits it and the Spirit is immanent in it" (Jn.4:34). "This most sure and certain faith comes not from man but is infused by God" (Jn.20:147).<sup>(14)</sup> This gift must be met with a receptive, though not a presumptuous response. Preaching will only generate faith in those who hear it with "an internal ear" (Jn.5:41), and it implies some cooperation. "God will only be found in holy places and in meditation on holy things, in the study of sacred literature, in meditating on the books of the prophets, apostles and evangelists" (Lk.2:35). Such meditation differs from mere human study in a way characteristically associated by Stapulensis with the notion of docta ignorantia :

Sacred ignorance is the elder sister and the more learned in that she does not know, and knows that she does not know. Knowledge is indeed the younger sister and is less learned in that she is learned and thinks that she knows. In the one case sight is blinded, in the other blindness is illuminated. The one knows; the other being ignorant knows even more. (Jn.16:120).

Those who want to impose their own method of investigation in areas where there is no method toil in vain, just as would be the case if the eye tried to see the sound which is invisible (Jn.14:111), but true faith placed in God alone necessarily obtains what it hopes for. The power (virtus) of such faith is a divine force operating within it, "immanent in living faith as light is in sight, and fire in incandescent iron. The iron is faith; the fire is God working through it" (Matt.17:169). Such faith is a reflection of the truth: "Christ is the exemplar, faith is the image of that original truth (imago veritatis)" (Matt.21:202).<sup>(15)</sup>

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For Stapulensis faith is still concerned with the profession of specific dogmas. "The Lord is our good samaritan who binds up our wounds with the doctrine of living faith. He takes care of us when he teaches us his faith and the holy dogmas of his faith" (Lk.10:65). "Let us then be converted to the author of our faith... that we may be truly able to recite the creed (symbolum fidei) truly testify to our faith, a perfect, living faith, inspired by the Spirit of Christ and informed by charity" (I Jn.2:8). Such faith should be firm and unwavering without any trace of diffidence.

When the apostles asked the Lord to increase their faith they meant not merely belief but rather full confidence in him and all that he said. Since faith should exclude all doubt, diffidence or hesitation, it is apparently called "faith" from such confidence (fides a fidendo dicta videatur), although confidence seems to pertain more to hope. (Lk.17:142).<sup>(16)</sup>

This is the perfect sign of that faith which is the gift and charism of the Holy Ghost, when there is perfect confidence in God. When this is absent, or wavering and hesitant, that faith is imperfect and human, the work of man not God. (Jas.1:5).

Perfect faith will attain salvation, and is indeed almost synonymous with it. "Preaching comes first, faith follows preaching and regeneration follows faith" (Mk.16:104). "Joy is given to the ear of faith" (LPs.50:9). When we hear the word of God, the holy Gospel, in faith, "the great Spirit of God descends on us, purifies and sanctifies us from all our sins" (Sunday Hom.Mon.post Pent.Acts 10).<sup>(17)</sup>

All who have sin, and especially the sin of unbelief, the greatest of all sins, are dead, but if they relinquish that sin and believe in Christ... though they are dead they will live; and all who live and believe in him, (for all who live have the justice of Christ that comes from faith and charity) will not die for ever. (Jn.11:54).

Conversely salvation is impossible without faith. Only faith can make our works acceptable to God who will display a rigorous justice towards those who are without the wedding-garment of faith working through charity(Sun.Hom.



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20 Pent.Matt.22). "The only way of salvation is to seek him alone who can save and who is known by faith, sought by hope and touched by love" (Matt.19:190).<sup>(18)</sup>

Other concomitant effects of faith are mentioned on many occasions. Faith enlightens men,<sup>(19)</sup> and unites them in one flock (Sunday Hom.2 Pasch.Jn.10). Those who have faith enter the Church which consequently shines out like a city set on a hill (Lk.8:75). Such faith casts out servile fear and confers real peace of heart (Sunday Hom.4 Adv. Philip.4, Trinity,I Jn.4). When it is perfect it precludes further sin since it is a gift drawing the heart upwards and not allowing it to fall back again to earth as it otherwise naturally would (I Jn.3:35). Moreover such faith is the real eating of the flesh of Christ, and thus he who always believes eats perfectly all the time: Christ while remaining unmoved in heaven instantly comes down to him wherever he is and nourishes and vivifies him; this is what it is to eat him spiritually (Jn.6:54).

The salvation consequent on faith is patient of somewhat fuller analysis in the later scriptural works. Legal justification is still distinguished from eternal life; the process was initiated by the law of circumcision, and sanctified and completed by Christ when he received John's baptism of penance, thus initiating the new law which culminates in the baptism administered by his Church (Matt.3:22). Christ alone has made satisfaction for our sins and his confession of them is itself redemptive.<sup>(20)</sup> Our justification consists in the application to us of the effects of his all-sufficient death:

If we have full confidence in him we shall be healed and justified; our sins will be pardoned and we shall be brought back to life from the death of sin. (Sunday Hom.24 Pent. Matt.9).

Abundant justice is thus given to us through the one who justifies with true justice (Sunday Hom.2 Pent. Matt.8), and Christ becomes our security and safeguard (FPs.2,3).

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This process of justification leads to salvation in which we participate first of all by believing in the promises of Christ who is our only saviour.<sup>(21)</sup> Salvation is the eternal joy of the sons of God (Mk.16:104), who will not be cast into the torment of exterior darkness nor condemned to judgement and handed over to eternal punishment, but will be raised up on the last day to life, salvation and eternal consolation. Judgement is two-fold, one way to life and resurrection, the other to death and condemnation, and all present afflictions are as nothing compared with the glory God wishes to give his elect.<sup>(22)</sup>

Justification consists in both the forgiveness of individual and personal sin and the reversal of the effects of original sin, a concept which is implicit in all the phrases and metaphors about curing sickness and raising the soul from death, but on occasion it is also explicit:

Behold the Lamb of God, he who takes away the tyranny of sin and the tinder (fomes) which the devil sowed in the descendants of Adam... If he takes away, condones and remits that sin which is universal, how much more does he take away particular sins...the author of our salvation takes away both universal sin and particular sins, and justifies us with a double justification. (Jn.1:12).

Original sin is "that sin we bring with us from the womb because we are still subject to our first birth", which is always followed by "that other sin which we miserably contract after putting on the immaculate garment of our second birth" (Lk.24:204.<sup>(23)</sup> This sin inherited from Adam is the cause of individual or "actual" sin:

The root of concupiscence is the tinder of sin planted in all by our first parents...concupiscence conceives when it is about to break forth into act; it gives birth when it comes forth in action. This is not original sin but actual sin coming from original sin. Sin is consummated when the will consents to it, which, for fully deliberate sin also means that this must come out into the open. But whether it does or not sin is consummated and has taken over when the will consents. (Jas.1:8)



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Concupiscence is the "evil inclination inherited from Adam which leads us towards sin" and will "give rise to the tree of unbelief and bear the fruit of mortal sins" unless it is "disciplined and mortified".<sup>(24)</sup> Similar terminology is used in these later works as in the earlier ones to describe the effects of original sin; "the weakness of the old Adam", "the flesh", "the poisoned root", "thorns and thistles" all help to describe the damage done to human nature.<sup>(25)</sup> Our understanding (sensus), judgement and will, in so far as they are ours and come from a corrupt root, are contrary to the divine understanding, judgement and will (Jn.6:56), and this evil inclination is "partly but not completely repressed by baptism", (Sunday Hom. 4 Oct.Epiph.Col.3) since

though by the grace of God sin is remitted and not imputed to us, and in this life is covered by the light and spirit of Christ, nevertheless we still have sin and there remains in us the tinder of concupiscence which is wholly sin (quod est omne peccatum), though washed and broken by the sprinkling of his blood. (I Jn.1:5).<sup>(26)</sup>

However we are not slaves of concupiscence any more but enjoy a spiritual liberty in which we can do all our good works freely and in faith (Sunday Hom.3 Pasch.I Pet.2). Those indeed who have followed their rebirth in Christ by co-dying with him and again coming to life with him have their sins taken away, and are no longer able to sin in that way. Christ's death means universal health (Jn.1:12).<sup>(27)</sup> What Stapulensis now understands by the forgiveness of sin may at first seem ambiguous in the face of such terminology as "remitted", "not imputed" "covered" and "condoned" (Jn.1:12); however these expressions are balanced by, and even precisely coupled with, the Latin verbs tollere, dimittere, remittere and veniam largire,<sup>(28)</sup> and the parallel French equivalents such as pardonner and remission.<sup>(29)</sup> The conclusion of Stapulensis' comment on the parable about the rich man and Lazarus seems to indicate his retention of a traditional mediaeval concept of sin and forgiveness:

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For some God remits the sin and the punishment, and these pass from death to eternal life. For others he remits neither, and these pass from the first death to the second. For others he remits the sin, that is the guilt, but retains the punishment as can be seen in II Kings 12 [David & Bathsheba], and these pass on to expiatory pains. (Lk.16:141).(30)

Stapulensis never tires of insisting that justification and salvation come only from God's mercy in Christ and not from the efforts of man himself. We cannot save ourselves; it is Christ's cross, not our own, which saves us (Matt.9:80), whether our penances are voluntary or involuntary (Sunday Hom.4 Pent.Rom.8).

Christ retained the unwilling follower...and rejected the one who was willing to follow him, to show us that our salvation is the work of his will and not our own. (Matt.8:76).

Zachaeus and the sinful woman are types of the justification to be expected from grace and not from our own works,<sup>(31)</sup> for even our spiritual works are done solely under the impulse of God's grace. "Jesus Christ makes us into a people pleasing to him, pursuing good works, that is works done by grace in faith" (Sunday Hom.Circum. Tit. 2).

Such salvation is not however automatic or infallible though God wills the salvation of all men.

The Lord wishes to wash all men inwardly and outwardly, in both soul and body, from mortal evils and light ones; he handed over his body and blood for all - the pure and the impure, the pious and the impious, the holy and the wicked - in order that all might share in salvation, as befitted himself and his supreme kindness. (Mk.14:83).

God is not an acceptor of persons and he wishes to save those from all nations who fear him and do the works of faith (Sunday Hom.Mon.Pent.Acts.10), but some response is required. When this response is lacking God's justice must run its course to condemnation. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows that prayer for oneself or for others living or dead, will not obtain what can only be secured in the way that Abraham and Lazarus secured it,



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by fidelity to the word of God, which is the means by which God wishes to save men (Sunday Hom.Trin.Lk.16). Men are not to judge in the case of others whether such response has been made (Sunday Hom.3 Adv.I Cor.4), but must be vigilant about their own continued response, since election is not immutable. God's call may come about in various ways, by contract (pactum) or by promise.

All who hear the Gospel of Christ are called to cultivate the Father's vineyard, but not all are said to be saved by election; some are saved rather by contract, some by promise, working for a longer or a shorter time. Those are saved by election who have only worked for a very short time, like the dying thief on the cross, and are very few, so let no one be over-confident and put off going to work. Many are called and saved by other methods, and these are saved if they do not give up working before the end of life; for those who have heard the good and saving word of God but have not worked, or have given up before the end, are indeed called but will be deprived of salvation. What is the use if you are sent into the vineyard but you do not stay there till the end? (Matt.20:192).(32)

It is possible to be elect at one point in life and later to lose this status. "When he first said to them 'You will sit on twelve thrones' Judas was not yet condemned and excluded from a place in glory...let everyone therefore strive to follow the divine counsels so that even if he is now a sinner he may become elect; and let the elect take care he does not fall" (Lk.22:173).

Stapulensis still rejects any rigid predestinarian attitude and takes some trouble to explain how the effectiveness of God's call does not violate man's free will.

Distinguishing between God's initiative in giving all men sufficient grace and the actual action of drawing them to him, which does not happen if they resist, he invokes the analogy of a boat stuck in the sand. If it is freed this is due to the pressure put on the rope attached to it, but if it stays where it is, even though pressure is being exerted, the fact that it remains stuck is due to itself, not to the absence of a pull exerted on the rope. So to draw and to be drawn both pertain to God; not to



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be drawn pertains to us (Jn.6:53). This point finds emphatic repetition in places:

The scriptures bear witness to me but you will not come to me that you may have life. It is as though he said, 'I will it but you do not; the Father wills it but you do not; the Holy Spirit who helps you and breathes in the scriptures, wills it but you do not. Therefore you perish not by the will of God but solely by your own will'. Indeed, whoever perishes, perishes thus because he is unwilling to come to life. (Jn.5:44).<sup>(33)</sup>

The nature of the required response which will help to ensure a man's salvation can be discerned in various places in the works in question. Constantly throughout these pages Stapulensis makes the point that it is not sufficient to hear Christ's word unless the hearer believes in him, and such faith cannot be without love. Just as a ray of light without heat vivifies nothing, so neither does faith without love; it is a dead faith, and so not faith at all (Jn.6:52).<sup>(34)</sup> Such love, which is the evidence of living faith, must be demonstrated outwardly, first by a godly life in accordance with the rule of the Gospel, which will attract others to believe also (Sunday Hom.23 Pent.Philip.3), but also by what are commonly called "good works" in the ordinary sense of the words. "All such works of faith are pleasing to God, but none more so in this spiritual religion than those cited here by the apostle, to visit the widows and orphans...these are commonly called the works of mercy, which are more fully listed in St. Matthew's Gospel" (Jas.1:12). So indissolubly has Stapulensis united faith, charity and works that he is able to explain failure in one precept of charity as failure in all: "if he has not acted from faith through charity, even if he has observed the rest, he has not observed them in the way he should. The man who transgresses in one single precept of charity is guilty in respect of all, for they cannot be observed without charity" (Jas.2:14). Far from condemning such good works Stapulensis asserts that they do help to ensure salvation:



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Take a firm hold on and make more sure of your salvation by the good works of virtue, knowledge, temperance and patience, performed in the faith and knowledge of Christ. (II Pet.1:5).

This upright life of active charity does not preclude traditional mediaeval practices of piety. Vows of virginity, fastings and prayers, corporal abstinence and mortification and many other such exercises are considered by Stapulensis as "spiritual incense offered to the Son of God" (I Pet.2:9), provided due discretion is used and such things as corporal mortification are not made an end in themselves (II Pet.1:4). Christian men should be continually mortified in the flesh, and the most effective means of mortification is the word of God itself which pierces and mortifies even to the heart (Sunday Hom.8 Pent.Rom.8).<sup>(35)</sup> Nor must we be put off when the word of God is presented to us in a way that is contrary to "our understanding, our flesh, our reason, our desires, our thoughts" (Sunday Hom. 4 Pasch .Jas.1). Faith and trust however must never be placed in any creature, but only in God himself.

All faith except that placed in the Son of God is foolishness and vanity. Anyone who walks by faith and trust in any other has missed the way, the truth and the life. Whoever goes outside the way is wandering; whoever goes outside the truth is mistaken; whoever goes outside the life is heading for death. The most blessed of all, the Virgin Mary...the angels...all the saints and martyrs...are not the way, although they have reached the end of the way. They would say...do not walk by us, but walk the way we walked. Believe in God; believe in Christ who is the way. (Jn.14:108).<sup>(36)</sup>

Stapulensis is not denying the role of the angels and saints in the mystical body, and he does advert to it in a positive way at times: "We are recalled from error by God's goodness and brought into his Church, where we may have the help of the angels and saints to enable us to be truly repentant" (Lk.15:134), but he points out that in the end those who have neglected to do good works for themselves can no longer be assisted by the works and



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prayers of others, whether men or angels (Matt.25:236). His attitude towards devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints has remained consistent and unchanged, in seeking to make clear the secondary and dependent role of such devotion. In the earlier works, he had used the technical term latria to designate the worship exclusively due to God alone (Rom.12:105) and had expanded on this subject with careful precision elsewhere.<sup>(37)</sup> The same correct attitude appears in these later works:

If your devotion leads you to implore the help of his Mother, of an apostle or a martyr, or of any saint whatever...let your piety and love lead you first to the Saint of saints...Present your offering there by asking the King of glory that he will deign to hear those others on your behalf. (Lk.21:164).

It is not lawful to invoke the help of the Virgin or another saint first if by that approach the worshipper is demonstrating more trust in Mary than in Christ alone, but as evidence merely of humility the practice is acceptable (Jn.12:94). Stapulensis retained a personal devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary throughout his life, apparently, and not infrequently includes gratuitous expressions of praise and veneration for her in both the earlier and the later works. He always makes clear however that her holiness is only the gift of God:

The Father is called holy...and this is absolute holiness...all other holiness is by participation and in varying degrees; thus we call the Mother of Jesus, the one and only God-bearing Virgin, holy, or most holy among women, because she has received a greater communication of holiness than all others...it would be better to attribute such titles...to no creature lest we give to any creature the incommunicable title which belongs to God alone. (Jn.18:126).<sup>(38)</sup>

Mary's role in the Church is not however to be ignored. God always sees her with those who stand beside her, that is, those who confess her to be the immaculate Mother of God. He gives her to us as our mother, and in this gift we should recognise his kindness towards us, and so give



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her praise and glory, but on no account worship (latria) (Jn.19:140).

It would seem that this carefully nuanced and balanced attitude characterises the whole of Stapulensis' treatment of his reforming themes of evangelical preaching, faith and justification:

The justice of Christ and of the New Law is twofold. One part consists in works by which we imitate Christ and fulfil his commands; the other consists in faith by which we are justified by God. This justice is from grace and follows perfected faith (fidem consummatam) just as good works spring from its power (virtus). The one is a gift, the other a permanent possession (habitus); the one, like light, comes down from above, purifying, beautifying and adorning everything; the other is like a beautiful wedding chamber prepared to receive the light that it may appear more beautiful, more handsome, and its adornment may be perfected. This consummates and perfects while the other initiates and prepares. Thus concern for the kingdom of God and his justice does not torment but consoles, it does not blind but illuminates, it does not corrupt but vivifies. It believes, hopes, loves ... (Matt.6:60). (39)

For him such reforming emphasis was in no way inconsistent with complete loyalty to the Catholic Church as he saw it. His views contradicted no fundamental doctrines but only popular misconceptions, distortions and corruptions; indeed he saw himself as attempting to bring the Church back to her true self, a point he had made quite explicit in his Magdalen pamphlets. (40) Nor was his attitude, as seen in these later works, inconsistent with his own earlier position; rather it was a logical development of it, for all the principal themes discernible now can be found in the Quincuplex and the Pauline Commentary, and no important theme broached there has entirely disappeared in the later works. The change of emphasis however, and the expanded and more central treatment of reforming themes, inevitably modified his position with regard to some traditional features of church life in practice, most noticeably in connection with the sacraments and the authority of the hierarchy.



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Stapulensis seems to see the division of the Church's rite of initiation into the two separate sacraments of baptism and confirmation as a degeneration from a primitive ideal:

Men of our day have so little sense of that interior unction of the Holy Spirit... The faithful of the early Church were anointed only with an interior unction like Christ himself who did not use an exterior anointing. Subsequently later Christians added the exterior anointing as a sign of this interior unction, but this is not what makes us like Christ or teaches us all things. May Christ give all an interior unction. (I Jn.2:25).

Evidently he saw the fading awareness of this spiritual interior unction as the cause of men's failure to appreciate evangelical doctrine, which was consequently, a failure to live up to the gifts and graces of baptism, for the man initiated by the sacraments of Christ is "purified by doctrine and adorned with charisms" (Matt. 12:124). He is convinced that a real awareness of the charisms received will enable all to perceive true doctrine without error:

Let us pray to our eternal Father that he will give us the manifestation and the awareness of his Holy Spirit, so that we can walk by true faith to God alone... Does anyone really think that the Spirit of God, who is God, will lead us, if we are attentive to him, to any other creature rather than to God? May God therefore in his mercy, give us the awareness of this great and wonderful and most powerful spirit. (Sunday Hom.Tues,Pent.Acts.8).

Such a concept of the effects of the sacrament of confirmation, the sign of the Holy Spirit's unction, must certainly have been at variance with the contemporary view of it, and the obvious encouragement given to personal interpretation of the scriptures would have been unwelcome to such authorities as the Sorbonne.

For Stapulensis it is part of his concept of the baptismal dignity of all Christians which he also describes as a universal priesthood, and characterises with his own particular notion of Christiformity:



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All those who come to Christ are anointed with the unction of the Spirit that they may become Christiform. Christ is indeed priest and king... We are anointed with that chrism that we all may be christs too, in him who takes his name from that anointing... He is Christ, the Anointed One, absolutely; we are christs by participation. All are anointed with an interior, spiritual unction that all may become kings and priests. This priesthood is universal for all, though particular in each one, so that each may offer his own spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ who is chief king and high priest... concerning that other, particular (i.e: ordained) priesthood we have spoken elsewhere. (I Pet.2:11).

Some change of emphasis can be noted in relation to the Eucharist. Stapulensis criticises the late mediaeval practice of adoring the Eucharist more often than receiving it:

It is a small thing to see him daily sacramentally, unless he is seen in the spirit and by faith, and the consummation of this is when he is received (sumatur), for he did not say 'Look at this', but 'Take this...' (Jas.5:33).

Clearly however this position does not contradict his faith in the presence of Christ in the sacramental species which can legitimately be adored. (41)

As in the earlier works the word penitence (resipiscencia) for Stapulensis still means primarily a change of mind:

Metanoia, the return to right reason, is the holy and desirable name for a change of sentiment, a conversion, a turning back to God, a movement which precedes the coming of the Holy Spirit; it is not the affliction or maceration of the flesh, although these may follow that holy change of heart as a sign of it. (Matt.3:17).

Penances, in the sense of actions which make satisfaction to God, can only be performed by Christ himself; the prophets frequently invited men to Be converted and Return to God, and John the Precursor had cried out Do penance, but the real "time of penance" came only with Christ. Stapulensis tells us that the genealogy introducing St. Matthew's Gospel is divided in such a way as to give "the number of penitence"; the previous period



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was one of imperfect penitence since he had not yet come who truly unbound the chains of sin (peccata relaxaret), when the kingdom of heaven would be opened to the penitent.<sup>(42)</sup>

He indeed truly preaches penitence for the remission of sins in His name who says that, in the penitence of Christ, all sins are remitted to those who believe firmly and faithfully in Him. (Lk.24:204).

Such a correct understanding of penitence is still set in a very traditional framework however:

That you do thus change your mind is due not to you, but to the Lord's drawing you into his Church, and to the help offered by the angels and saints that you may truly be able to change your mind. (Lk.15:134).

Penitence understood in this way as a change of heart necessarily plays a preparatory and dispositive role in man's salvation.

He began to preach penitence so that he could infuse grace...which he could not unless they had previously retreated from their former manner of life...they could not be inscribed in the spiritual kingdom unless they had abandoned the works of the flesh. What is the use of washing a pig if it immediately afterwards goes back to wallowing in the mud? The man who is cleansed by the infusion of grace without a change of heart is just the same. He chose his apostles from among those who had been prepared by the preaching of penitence, either John's or his own. (Matt.4:30).

There is a sense in which the repentant sinner has to "do penance"; "Let us cut down the branches of the tree of concupiscence and put them beneath the feet of the ass and her foal, on which Christ is seated" (Sunday Hom.1 Adv. Matt.21), and we must understand that penitence is not to be done once only; the lost sheep who hear the word of God and approach him to do so "more and more day by day until they have repented perfectly" (Lk.15:134). "God never forecloses on his kindness towards sinners" (FPs. 36), but the penitent must persevere to the end. "If we are called in youth to labour in the vineyard let us bear the burden of the day and the heats in overcoming the concupiscences that lead us to do evil", for it is rare for the tinder of concupiscence to be totally extinguished



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in the present life. The wise man will lead a life "disciplined by the wisdom and discipline of God which comes through the word of God and the mortification of the Spirit, not the wisdom and discipline of the flesh which comes through the word of men, and the mortifications of men which they call penances".<sup>(43)</sup> Such a repentant frame of mind will normally be demonstrated by some outward action; David confesses his sins and then immediately offers himself to teach others to do the same and to preach the goodness of God. Such are the obligations of full and true penitence. (FPs.51).

Stapulensis may be open to the charge of inconsistency, or may be considered to have changed his mind, on the topic of exterior penitential actions. In places he has explicitly alluded to punishment which remained to be worked off after the guilt of a sin had been forgiven,<sup>(44)</sup> and the concept is reaffirmed in comment on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The phrase Send someone to them (my brothers) that they may do penance and so not come into this place of torment is explained as meaning that punishment can be worked off in this world, and that if a person is "doing penance", that is making satisfaction for punishment, when he dies, he will have to complete it after death (Lk.16:141). This would seem to imply that "penances" (poenas expiatorias) are not merely a suitable sign of a change of heart, but are actually required for entry into heaven which Stapulensis describes as the consummation of justification. It has been suggested that he changed his position on this topic between the time of the Gospel Commentary in 1522 and the composition of the Sunday Homilies in 1525, since the exhortation there annexed to the same parable omitted entirely the long academic discussion of hell and purgatory which had appeared in the Gospel Commentary. The exhortation encouraged the congregation to listen to the word of God: They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them, and reminded them that their salvation could not be obtained through the intercession of any spirit who had left this world but only through the word of God (Sunday Hom.



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Trinity, Lk. 16).<sup>(45)</sup> It is not however impossible to reconcile the apparently divergent positions represented here. Acceptance of the traditional discipline of the Church which required the performance of penitential works in "satisfaction" did not contradict the doctrine that sins are forgiven by God solely in virtue of the satisfaction made by Christ, and the type of audience addressed in the Sunday Homilies would be sufficient explanation of heavier emphasis being put on the sole efficacy of Christ's actions. The preachers in Meaux doubtless encountered some of the same ignorant and superstitious reliance on indulgences and pious devotions that had so offended Luther.

Stapulensis continued to accept the discipline of the Church with regard to the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation, and frequently referred to it. The need for, and the obligation to observe, the sacramental rite is mentioned in the Gospel Commentary and even emphasised in the Sunday Homilies,<sup>(46)</sup> and Stapulensis is clearly aware of a possible seeming contradiction in his teaching: "Legal justification was only symbolical, in sign and sacrament. It is God who justifies, and remits all debts fully. Real justification, and remission which is fully complete, is in God; in signs, and most sure signs, it is in the Church and in the mysteries of the Church" (Matt. 6:53). His desire for reform however led him to develop two less familiar themes in connection with this sacrament. He seems to suggest that the priest or minister of reconciliation should not always impose a "penance" or work of satisfaction on the penitent, but should rather help him to accept such pains and hardships as come his way from the hand of God, as expiation and necessary medicine for a more spiritual way of life, prescribed by the all-wise Physician. (I Jn. 5:89).

Stapulensis further seems to see the contemporary form of the sacramental rite as a concession to lukewarm faith and weakened charity:



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Formerly there used to be a mutual confession of offences and a fraternal reconciliation following the evangelical teaching of the Lord, that we should first be reconciled with our brother...O the wonderful mercy of God! If you forgive your brother in faith in the word of God, and if he asks in faith, he is forgiven, for this should be a work of faith and charity. This was the sort of confession that used to be practised among the faithful, but nowadays when faith has grown cold, or is almost extinct...there is another manner of confessing sins which he in his mercy accepts. (Jas.5:40).

He points out that the confessions found in scripture, whether of Esdras or Azarias in the Old Testament, or of the Publican or the Prodigal Son in the New, are addressed primarily to God. To this the New Law has added the obligation of confessing to one's brother, but such confession to men, made either in the primitive Christian manner to one's brother, or in the contemporary fashion to a priest, is valueless unless confession is first made to God with a sincere heart. Such confession to a priest has come in, he thinks, because most men have fallen away from faith and, mutually offending each other, will no longer mutually confess their faults to one another and achieve reconciliation that way. Evidently in a better world the sacramental rite would not be necessary: "Would that we did live in such faith and charity with one another that this daily confession to God would suffice, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us". (Jas.5:40). While Stapulensis' reforming ideal here offers a rather different perspective on the sacrament of penance from the one which had become traditional in his time, it does not seem to be inconsistent with his continued loyalty to the current practice of the Church. (47)

He goes somewhat further in connection with the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, which had by the sixteenth century come to be regarded as the last despairing preparation for death. Stapulensis sees this practice of postponing the ministrations of the Church to the last minute as a sign of lack of faith among those who love the life of the flesh but have no care for the life of the



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spirit. Far from summoning the elders of the Church to proclaim the Gospel of salvation, folk call in whatever priest may be available merely to carry out the sacramental rite of anointing, which has consequently ceased to be an aid for the sick at all. His view is significant not so much for the change in practice which he would like to see, as for the change of ministers which may be implied:

When health in this present life is despaired of, then instead of the elders of the Church, whom the Apostle understood to be men full of the Spirit and of faith, proclaiming in all its purity the word of God and the Gospel of salvation, they summon simply any priest whatever (for this is what those are called who administer the sacraments) and so they are anointed. In this situation little or nothing of what the Apostle lays down is actually done... O tempora! O mores! Would that he who is merciful and rich in all things would now renew this world by his mercy in the Spirit, in faith, and in the grace of evangelical doctrine. (Jas.5:39)

The apparent contrast between seniores ecclesiae...viros plenos spiritu et fide and presbyteri qualescumque (sic enim vocant eos qui sacramenta ministrant) might perhaps suggest a change in his views about the ordained hierarchy of the Church.

The ordained hierarchy is still clearly presupposed by many of Stapulensis' references to its sacramental functions and by his use of traditional titles and terminology, but his concept of how it should operate in the Church, and what activities should chiefly characterise it, does seem to have altered. "Those who hold authority in the Church", who "are in supremacy over the Church" are still referred to as "Christ's vicars" and successors of the apostles,<sup>(48)</sup> but at times Stapulensis seems to be making a more precise distinction between the terms presbyter and sacerdos. It seems possible that this distinction is implied in his remarks about the sacrament of the anointing of the sick already quoted, and elsewhere he refers to "those priests (sacerdotes) who are also presbyters deputed to preside at public functions" (I Pet.2:11). Similarly the ministers to whom the lepers



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are commanded to show themselves, in the various passages where Stapulensis is upholding the practice of sacramental confession, are designated sacerdotes, while St. Peter's exhortation to feed the flock of God is seen as addressed to all future presbyteri et epsicopi (I Pet.5:33). Possibly a distinction is being made between the ministers of the sacraments and those who are primarily teachers and preachers; on the other hand the general term clerus is used in the same context (I Pet.5:33) and elsewhere those who "irrigate the Church with life-giving showers of spiritual doctrine" are referred to as praecepti (LPs. 146:8).<sup>(49)</sup>

Stapulensis certainly lays more stress on the teaching function of the ministers of the Church than was common in the late mediaeval period, in keeping with his desire to see a reform in the life of the Church brought about by evangelical preaching.

Idolatry is destroyed and the one, single God adored wherever the proclamation of the pure evangelical law has had, is having, or will have a spiritually vivifying effect, where Peter and Paul and the apostles are nothing except ministers and dispensers of the mysteries of God. (Mk.15:94).

The obligation of a bishop (evesque) or a parish priest (curé) is to teach continually and to pray for the people committed to his care, since God wishes to speak to them, comfort and strengthen them against the temptations of this world (Sunday Hom.16 Pent.Eph.3). Peter, who stands for all shepherds, is to govern Christ's sheep by feeding them with sound doctrine, albeit adapted to their stage of growth in the Christian life. All pastors should, like Simon bar Jona, be "sons of the Holy Spirit" if they are to pasture the flock of Christ, for "flesh and blood, human understanding and human reason, are useless for this purpose" (Jn.21:150).<sup>(50)</sup> Criticism of the abuses current among the clergy is not absent from these later works, and occasionally has an interesting or unusual twist. Christ's generosity, in sharing our nature and thus becoming the source of all life and



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forgiveness for us, should be the model of our generosity in sharing God's gifts with others; therefore simony should be avoided! (Matt.10-89) A sarcastic gibe seems to be implied when it is pointed out that Christ is a sign of contradiction for many such as the Scribes and Pharisees, "the bishops and priests of the Law" (Sunday Hom.Sun.Oct.Xmas.Lk.2).<sup>(51)</sup>

More significant perhaps are Stapulensis' references to the common priesthood of all the faithful, though they are coupled with a clear concept of the ordained priesthood.

No longer slaves under the Law...in the liberty of the Spirit...we now serve in faith, and in trust in God alone, by a reasonable interior sacrifice, offering our body, mortified by the Holy Spirit, just as our Saviour Jesus Christ offered himself for all of us. That is the sacrifice of the Christian, and of everyone who knows himself to be a son of God and imitator of the great Son of God by nature, Jesus Christ. (Sunday Hom.Sun.Oct.Xmas,Gal.4).

He still considers prayer, meditation, works of mercy, vows of virginity, fasting and the like to constitute such "reasonable sacrifices", and points out that this holy and spiritual priesthood is common to all the faithful so that each individual offers his own acceptable sacrifice to God through Our Lord Jesus Christ:

All the faithful are in truth spiritual temples, spiritual priests, spiritual sacrifices. Spiritual priests, I say, anointed for this by the Holy Spirit that they may offer their sacrifices to God with a pure conscience, mortified in the flesh and alive in the spirit. Christ has recognised such priests everywhere (universaliter novit) though the common folk (vulgus) recognise only the particular priesthood, these common folk who, in ignorance of the scriptures, have now for a long time neglected their own dignity and, unaware of it, have relapsed into the condition merely of their first, carnal birth. (I Pet.2:9).

Evidently this recognition of the spiritual dignity of all the faithful is in no way inconsistent for Stapulensis with the retention of an ordained hierarchy



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whose role is specified in the same passage:

The particular priesthood is not common to all, but belongs only to those who are commonly called sacerdotes and presbyteri. Their role is sincerely to instruct others in the word of God so that they may be strong in faith, hope and charity towards God and their neighbour, and to administer the sacraments. They cannot, or should not, do this without a deeper and richer unction of the Holy Spirit than is possessed by those who are being instructed. (I Pet.2:9). (52)

Little more is to be gleaned from these later works about Stapulensis' attitude towards the contemporary papacy. It has already been pointed out that his main emphasis is placed on Peter's teaching function, (53) and this approach is naturally combined with his reforming interest in evangelical preaching and in the centrality of faith in the Christian life. It is the function of the door-keeper and pastor of the Church (the vicar of Christ, who is himself the door) to be vigilant in guiding all towards faith, towards hope and the fullest possible trust in Christ, towards charity and good works (Mk.13:78). The weakness of Peter's own faith was revealed when he three times denied his Lord, and fled in the face of danger. He was converted not by his own merits but by the kindness (beneficium) of Christ, and thereafter he was able to confirm, strengthen and reinforce the faith of his brethren by his own example, though this was the work not so much of Peter himself as of Christ "who made Peter able to stand firm" (Lk.22:174).

The net in which Peter caught the miraculous draught of fish is the "doctrine of Christ" (Lk.5:52), the one hundred and fifty-three great fish caught by him in this net of doctrine on the morning of the resurrection are the nations of the world gathered into the Church; the fact that the net was not broken symbolises the enduring integrity of Christ's doctrine in the world (Jn.21:149). Christ the Good Samaritan brings the unfortunate victim of the robbers to the inn of Mother Church and confides him to his vicar, the inn-keeper, the keeper of the sheepfold. The following day, the day of the new era,



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he gives his vicar two pence, the Two Testaments, so that he in his turn may take care of us by means of that doctrine (Lk.10:65).

This attitude of Stapulensis towards faith and doctrine can still be seen to be mystical rather than polemical. The fact that the disciples on the lakeside on the morning of the resurrection dared not ask Christ who he was is taken to symbolise the state of reverence and praise that will obtain in heaven "when there will be complete satiety of all knowledge and all good things" and "no longer any need to ask anything" (Jn.21:149). Christ's threefold question: Simon, son of John, do you love me? is prompted by the less than satisfactory nature of Peter's first two answers. To say, Thou knowest that I love Thee, is no more than a human reaction, and in response to these first two replies Peter is given charge only of the beginners and the illuminated, the lambs and the yearling-sheep. Stapulensis interprets Peter's third reply, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee, as a full confession of Christ's divinity, in response to which Peter is given charge of the third grade, the perfect, to feed them with that perfect doctrine such as St. Paul passed on to the Corinthians, Christ the power of God and Christ the wisdom of God. These perfect are to be pastured on the highest mountains and mysteries of doctrine by the Holy Spirit (Jn.21:149).

Stapulensis equated Peter's threefold denial with the three ages of the Church; when the first age, with the fervour of the martyrs, had passed, the second (still current in the sixteenth century) was marked by the extinction of the spirit and the revival of the flesh with all its concupiscences (Matt.26:263).<sup>(54)</sup> A revival in the Spirit was the reform that Stapulensis desired for he believed that this would mean a renewal of the true Church, the Church as she really is, holy, without spot or wrinkle, established in truth and holiness and making true and holy decrees. The presupposition of his



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argument in the Magdalen pamphlets had been the discrepancy between the true manifestation of the Church in primitive times, and the subsequent distortions and corrupt exemplifications of that Church which had been allowed to creep in in later ages. Such things must be attributed not to the Church but to "someone deceived by excessive stupidity", or perhaps to some "screaming advocate who was a mouth-piece of the Father of lies".<sup>(55)</sup> This assumption did however lead him to employ a hermeneutical method which seemed, at the time, to undermine the teaching authority of the contemporary Church. He took it for granted that the unassailable truth of the scriptures is self-evident to any intelligent reader, and that conclusions which follow rationally from this are necessarily true. The evidence of the scriptures and the use of reason should therefore prevail over the testimony of "authorities" and the force of long-established custom. Thus teaching based on patristic evidence or current practices in liturgy must be evaluated in the light of scripture and reason, when there is no definitive pronouncement of a council on the subject. Where conflicting arguments can be presented matters of faith must be distinguished from mere questions of history which are open to free enquiry. More weight should be given to the sources in proportion to their antiquity and consequent nearness to Christ himself, the source of all truth; disagreement between two equally ancient or respectable series of sources should be resolved by careful analysis of each in the light of the scriptural text. Long established custom on its own should not be allowed to obstruct such a search for truth, "which is surely what God would wish for his Church", and the liturgy cannot be accepted as a decisive source of evidence since it is an accidental and not an essential feature of the Church.<sup>(56)</sup> Appeal to the authority of the contemporary ecclesiastical hierarchy was not one of the sources of truth explicitly included in those listed by Stapulensis in his Magdalen pamphlets, though it should be remembered that he did seek the approval of the Pope



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for this work, and had upheld the Pope's teaching authority elsewhere.

In the light of his attitude towards corruptions and distortions current in the liturgy and in popular devotions, it is hardly surprising to find that Stapulensis' views on some subjects are expressed more emphatically and bluntly in the Sunday Homilies by comparison with the carefully balanced and nuanced treatment apparent in the Gospel Commentary, and it must also be remembered that he was not the sole author of the Homilies. It seems to have been realised that such a reform movement might provoke serious persecution:

This Gospel shows us that those who teach the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the evangelical truth, will be attacked by the Pharisees...trying to catch them out with their questions, seeking occasion to hand them over to death...They will be unable to avoid the dilemma unless God deliver them...These hypocrites will not achieve their purpose for the word of God must conquer...Therefore my brothers, be courageous in proclaiming the word of Jesus Christ, the holy Gospel...(Sunday Hom.23 Pent.Matt.22).<sup>(57)</sup>

In 1525 the Sorbonne extracted forty-eight propositions for censure from the Sunday Homilies, all of which could be said to illustrate the change of emphasis discernible in Stapulensis' later works. Ten of these propositions were concerned with the invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints, or with the celebration of particular feastdays in their honour;<sup>(58)</sup> five were seen as teaching a sola fide doctrine,<sup>(59)</sup> and eleven were considered to be denying the efficacy of human works or merit in the matter of man's salvation.<sup>(60)</sup> Seven were interpreted as proclaiming the all-sufficiency of scripture,<sup>(61)</sup> and eight as condemning the use of human intellectual effort.<sup>(62)</sup> Other propositions were condemned for attacking the Vulgate (No. IV), the ceremonies and rites of the Church (No. IX), for teaching that penitential works of satisfaction are unnecessary (No. XLIII), for denying the validity of free-will in man (No. XXIII), for an heretical presentation of Trinitarian



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doctrine caused by an inadequate vernacular translation (No. XXV), and for contradicting the text of St. Paul by asserting that faith, hope and charity are inseparable in this life (Nos. XIX & XX).

The level of censure passed varied from outright heretical, through schismatic, erroneous, impious, temerarious and scandalous to arrogant and unwise, and association with previous heresies was frequently mentioned. Eleven propositions were described as Lutheran, but there seems to have been as much concern about the general tendency to undermine the customs and institutions of the Church, as about the dissemination of erroneous doctrine, a situation which would reflect what we know from other sources about the criticisms levelled at the reformers in Meaux in 1525.<sup>(63)</sup> From a comprehensive study of Stapulensis' later works it seems possible to assert that his position was not essentially either heretical or Lutheran, but it is not difficult to see why some of his assertions seemed threatening to the authorities of the Sorbonne. His concept of faith, and its centrality in his teaching did appear to undermine the authority of the Church:

Those who have perfect faith say to the woman "We no longer believe because of your testimony, for we have heard him for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world". After this let us not say "I do not believe the Gospel unless I believe the Church, or unless the Church approves", or something like that. Rather let us say, with the inhabitants of Sychar who were already true believers, "We no longer believe because of your testimony", for no one except Jesus Christ himself preaches the Gospel to us - blessed is he above all. From him therefore and through him let us hear it and say: "We have heard and we know that here is the true Saviour of the world". Those who believe in the former manner believe weakly and humanly; as the dialecticians say, they believe that he is. Those who believe in this way believe divinely and strongly, and, as they say, they believe because of what he is. Not Christ because of the Samaritan woman, but the Samaritan woman because of Christ. (Jn.4:34).

## Chapter 5      FOOTNOTES

- (1) Cf. above, chapter 2, note (57). Preface to the Quincuplex Psalterium.
- (2) No attempt has been made at a numerical computation of the frequency of themes or references.
- (3) Cf. chapter 2 above.
- (4) The same remark appears in the exhortation added to the second edition of the French Psalter.
- (5) Cf. above, chapter 2, note (47).
- (6) The exhortation added to the second edition of the French Psalter develops this point at some length; cf. above, chapter 2, note (66).
- (7) See Sunday Hom.24 Pent.Col.1, for the same point.
- (8) This phrase, which crops up elsewhere in Stapulensis' works, e.g: Magdalen: Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, para.55, seems to be an echo of St. Augustine, Ep.10.2.
- (9) E.g. Lk.15:135, Jn.6:51, LPs.58:7.
- (10) See also LPs.17:31, 64:13, 70:17.
- (11) See also Jn.4:33 and FPs. 2nd edn. exhortation.
- (12) See also LPs.64:13, Sunday Hom.5 Oct.Epiph,Jn.6 and 25 Pent.Jn.6.
- (13) See also LPs.126:3, 139:1-10.
- (14) See also Matt.21:202, LPs.92:5.
- (15) See also Mk.8:37.
- (16) St.Thomas Aquinas also made this point; cf. Stephanus Pfurtner, Luther and Aquinas - A Conversation. Our Salvation, Its Certainty and Peril (London, 1964).
- (17) See also Matt.12:124.
- (18) See also Matt.3:20, 18:179, Jn.6:52, Sunday Hom. I Adv. Rom.3, St.Stephen Jn.21.
- (19) See also Lk.8:73, LPs.12:4, 71:5, 143:7.
- (20) See also LPs.68:1-7, Sunday Hom. 11 Pent.I Cor.15.
- (21) See also Jas.4:25, FPs.3, 130.
- (22) See also Jn.5:40, 6:52, LPs.93:14, Sunday Hom.4 Pent.Rom.8.



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- (23) See also Jn.1:12, LPs.50:6-7.
- (24) See also Jas.3:19, LPs.138:12, Sunday Hom.4 Oct. Epiph.Col.3.
- (25) See also Matt.7:66, Jas.1:7, 3:19.
- (26) See also Jas.5:40, LPs.15:7, 36:25, 72:21, 120:3.
- (27) See also Sunday Hom.Septuag.Matt.20.
- (28) See Lk.15:136, 16:141, Jn.1:12.
- (29) See FPs.32, 36, 130.
- (30) See also LPs.93:14, 111:7.
- (31) See also Mk.7:35, Lk.7:73, 19:152, Jn.6:56, LPs. 32:2, 39:6, 43:4, 61:9, FPs.2nd.edn.exhortation, 23, 27, 35, 62, 146, Sunday Hom.Oct.Epiph.Rom12.
- (32) See also I Jn.2:22.
- (33) See also Sunday Hom.2 Pent.Lk.24.
- (34) See also Jn.1:12-13, 15:114, Jas.1:5, I Jn.2:8, LPs.132:1.
- (35) See also LPs.49:24, where Stapulensis renders the Vulgate phrase, Sacrificium laudis honorificabit me as: "Domanti fomitem pravum veluti sacrificium laudis imputabitur," in his Chaldaic version.
- (36) See also LPs.85:9, FPs.2nd.edn.exhortation, 35, Sunday Hom.3 Adv.I Cor.4, 13 Pent.Gal.3.
- (37) Cf. above, chapter 3, note (60).
- (38) Compare this expression with that found in I Cor.11: 74, "Sic virgo illa beatorum beatissima supra omnes spirituales tam viros quam mulieres, solo Christi excepto, ex quo et propter quem ipsa solum creata est. Nam omnium spiritualium mater. Unde fit ut in Maria depositum sit Evae velamen. Nam inter eam Christum Dominum, ex quo est, et propter quem est, nullum intercedit medium".
- (39) See also Lk.12:114, LPs.89:19.
- (40) Cf. above, chapter 1, notes (101) - (103), (105).
- (41) Cf. above, chapter 4, notes (55) - (57).
- (42) See also Matt.1:4, 3:17, 4:25, LPs.129:5.
- (43) Cf. above, chapter 1, note (183). See Jas.3:19, Sunday Hom.Septuag.Matt.20. See also LPs.15:7, 31:11, 35:1-3, 98:4.

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- (44) Cf. above, chapter 3, extract from Philemon 4.  
See also note (30) here.
- (45) See Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, pp.205-6: "Si l'exemple de la doctrine du Purgatoire est probant, nous devrions retrouver une nette évolution entre le Lefèvre des années 1522, celui des Commentaires sur les Evangiles, et celui qui vers 1525 collabora aux Epistres et Evangiles pour les cinquante-deux semaines de l'an, puis composa à la même date les Commentaires sur les Epistres Catholiques, publiés en 1527". If evolution here means a substantial change in belief and doctrine, the argument would not seem to be conclusive.
- (46) Cf. above, chapter 4, note (53).
- (47) Erasmus' work, Exomologesis, sive modus confitendi, was printed by Etienne Dolet in 1524, and it seems likely that Stapulensis would have read it, though he said that he had not yet done so, in a letter to Guillaume Farel, Meaux, 6 July 1524, Herminjard I, no.103, p.224. This work offered arguments for and against the retention of auricular confession in the list of sacraments, concluding in favour of such retention. For a discussion of its arguments see, Lucien Febvre, Dolet Propagateur, cf. above, chapter 4, note (18).
- (48) See Mk.13:78, Lk.10:65, 17:144, III Jn.5, LPs.89:18.
- (49) Cf. also LPs.131:9, "Sacerdotes eius sunt sacra Christi mysteria monstrantes, sancti eius qui illa suscipiunt fideque imbuuntur".
- (50) Stapulensis here interprets Bar Iona as "son of the dove", obviously because it suits his theme of inspiration by the Holy Spirit. Anticipating the objection that the correct reading is Simon Ioannis, "son of John", he retorts that this version does not occur in any of the Greek manuscript codices he has seen, (i.e. Ἰωαννῆς for Ἰωάν) and where it occurs in printed codices it is a corruption! For the same emphasis on this teaching function see also LPs.45:6-7, 48:1, 91:14, 92:7, 106:37.
- (51) See also LPs.72:16, "Dissimulat Christus animadversionem in impios qui suo ipsorum exemplo et infelici felicitate sua, trahunt fideles ad consimiliter vivendum, quousque visitabit statum sanctuarii sui, qui est status clericorum in terra, et tunc intelliget in exterminationem eorum".
- (52) See also LPs.49:8, 50:17-18, 68:35.
- (53) See above, chapter 4, notes (45) and (46).



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- (54) See also LPs.58:7, 70:10, 91:10, 101:25, 136:title.
- (55) Cf. above, chapter 1, note (101).
- (56) See Magdalen: Disceptatio, Secunda Emissio, para. 55, 62.
- (57) For the idea that scripture should be used as a defence against all attacks see LPs.22:6, 126:6.
- (58) Nos. V,VI,IX,XIX, XXXIIII-XXXV, XLI, XLII, XLIV.
- (59) Nos. I, XVI, XXII, XXVI, XLVII.
- (60) Nos. XI, XII, XIV, XVII, XVIII, XXVII, XXVIII, XXXVII-XXXIX, XLVI.
- (61) Nos. II, XXI, XXIV, XXX-XXXII, XL.
- (62) Nos. III, VII, VIII, XIII, XV, XXXIV, XLV, XLVIII.
- (63) See above, chapter 1.

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### The Ecclesiology of Stapulensis' Final Years.

Two further publications remain to be discussed which may offer some slight evidence for Stapulensis' ecclesiological views during the final years of his life, his two editions of the whole bible translated into French, published in 1530 and 1534.<sup>(1)</sup> Since there are significant differences between the two editions they will be discussed separately.

With the release of King Francis I of France from captivity in Madrid in 1526, Stapulensis was able to return from his exile in Strasbourg under the patronage of Marguerite of Angoulême, and he became royal librarian at Blois in July 1526, where he seems to have remained until he went with Marguerite to Nérac in 1530 or 1531.<sup>(2)</sup> His French translation of the bible must therefore have been made at Blois although it was printed by Martin Keyser at Antwerp. The translation of the text of the Old Testament was initially published in four separate volumes: the first two appeared in April and September 1528, the third in August 1530 and the last in July 1532. These volumes contained only the text without comment or other extraneous matter. Meanwhile the one-volume edition of the whole bible appeared in 1530 from Antwerp. The text of an imperial privilege, dated Malines 4 July 1530, granting Martin Keyser a two-year monopoly to print and sell the bible in French, is included at the head of the book, which contains a translation of all the books of the Old and New Testaments into French, made, as the title-page asserts, from the "pure and entire translation of St. Jerome, compared and revised in accordance with the most ancient and correct examples".<sup>(3)</sup> The text is preceded by a prefatory letter addressed to the reader and by two lists or tables which will be discussed below. The body of the text is furnished with an elementary critical apparatus consisting of a reference system by which chapters are divided into canons or lettered paragraphs, and the provision of cross-references to other relevant portions



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of scripture; further, each book of the bible, or in most of the Old Testament each chapter, is headed with a "brief argument" giving a summary of its contents. It is from these various elements that Stapulensis' views in 1530 are to be deduced.<sup>(4)</sup>

The prefatory letter, addressed to the reader without signature or superscription, is ostensibly an impersonal and anonymous prologue, but its tone and content seem to justify its attribution to Stapulensis himself, though the conjectural nature of this attribution should perhaps be borne in mind when analysing the views therein expressed. The reader is reminded that in II Timothy, Paul praises the scriptures because God is their author; for this reason they are superior to all human means for acquiring eternal happiness; they confound all errors and render those who hear them perfect. Consequently, difficulties and obscurities must not put the reader off, nor must they make him seek some other gloss or exposition, for the scriptures are as far above all other human writings as God is above man. The suggested hermeneutic which follows would seem to be characteristic of Stapulensis: obscure passages are to be clarified by comparison with other passages in the scriptures themselves where the meaning is clear, and the title-page of the volume points out that indication of such concordant passages ("which have been carefully revised"), is provided by asterisks in the margin of the text. Three rules are given which are reminiscent of Stapulensis' advice elsewhere: firstly, the mode of speech being employed in a passage must be carefully considered; secondly, every aspect of the context in which the passage occurs must be carefully studied; and thirdly, understanding of the passage must be sought by a "believing<sup>(5)</sup> and reverent heart, motivated not by desire for human glory, or mere intellectual curiosity, but by desire for the glory of God and the profit and edification of one's neighbour".<sup>(6)</sup>

The exaltation and pride of place here accorded to scripture is entirely consistent with Stapulensis'



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long-standing attitude traceable since 1500, and would seem to betoken no significant change in his views as hitherto encountered. The preference here given to scripture "above all human means" for gaining eternal happiness would not necessarily imply rejection of the externally structured Church, liturgy and sacraments, since Stapulensis would hardly regard these as "human means". The rejection of glosses and other human expositions of the scripture, together with the hermeneutical method recommended is a familiar aspect of his own scriptural study.

The second part of this prologue would seem to imply a conventional acceptance of the authority of the Church in the matter of the canon of scripture. It consists of a list of the books of the Old and New Testaments which were commonly accepted as canonical from the fourth to the sixteenth centuries, in many cases specifically attributed to their popularly reputed authors.<sup>(7)</sup> Two remarks of some interest follow the Old Testament list: we are told that it includes only those books which are found in the Hebrew, or which "are canonical, all of which are received and approved by the Church because of the good doctrine and prophecy which is to be found in them." Those books which are found only in Greek (the modern Deutero-Canonical books) are listed with the explanation that they are called "apochryphal because their author is unknown".<sup>(8)</sup> The prologue concludes with an affirmation of the fact that all the books of scripture look towards Christ as their end - a position entirely consistent with Stapulensis' Christocentric attitude throughout his scriptural work, and with a familiar pious reminder that the reader will understand and profit from these books only by that same mercy of Him who makes "little ones wise in the things of heaven".

Some slight further evidence of continued conventional acceptance of the Church's external authority is to be found in one of the lists or tables preceding the text, which as the title-page announces, consists of a



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list of the epistles and gospels for all the Sundays of the year. In fact it includes not only the Sundays, but all the principal days of the temporal cycle, and is followed by a list of those for the sanctoral cycle, both proper and common. This fact would seem to indicate that the compiler envisaged its being used within the existing liturgical framework, and planned nothing more radical than turning the existing scheme of readings in the liturgy into the vernacular.<sup>(9)</sup>

The second table which precedes the body of the text is described on the title page as being "for the subject-matter of the two Testaments"; it in fact collects together the "brief arguments" from the head of each chapter or book of the bible, (somewhat abbreviated in the case of the New Testament). Stapulensis thus provided a kind of precis of the contents of the entire bible, focussed on those topics which he considered most significant, and it is from these brief arguments that his views are perhaps most clearly to be discerned. Here we shall examine only those items which are germane to our subject; much of the material is otherwise unremarkable and offers no more than a summary, of no great originality, of the text on which it is based.

Stapulensis constantly finds references to Christ throughout the Old Testament, and notes this in his argument at the head of several of the books.<sup>(10)</sup> This would seem to be the basis for the remark in the prologue that these books were received and approved for the prophecy they contained, a point which recurs on the title-page of the New Testament section, where we are told that the New Testament demonstrates how our salvation was achieved by Jesus Christ "announced by God to our fathers from the beginning of the world, and foretold by the prophets in many places."

Allusions to the Church too are found by Stapulensis in Deuteronomy, several chapters of Isaias and Aggaeus, some of which are further specified by him. Thus Deuteronomy 23 is concerned with "those who should



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be admitted to the Church of God", while Isaias 60 concerns the "condition and constitution of the Church in primitive times, in the present time and in the future." Christian baptism appears in the argument preceding Isaias 55, and Paul's "baptismal regeneration" is specifically noted at the head of Acts 9. Allusion to the apostles is found in Joel 3 and Zacharias 1, while we are told at the head of I Timothy that St. Paul here "teaches about the prescription for bishops, deacons and the whole order of the Church"; similarly the argument before the Epistle to Titus tells us that he here "instructs Titus concerning the establishment (constitutionis) of priests and their manner of life". It would seem that we have here an entirely conventional picture of the hierarchical Church which Stapulensis had no thought of abandoning.

Concern about schism appears at the head of Proverbs 6 which is seen as indicating how schismatics may be restrained, while Ecclesiasticus 21 warns about the boldness of the heretic. What heresy consists in, is made no clearer here than elsewhere in Stapulensis' work, and the designation of it which appears at the head of the Epistle to Titus, is already familiar: "... heretics who believe in other traditions than those of Christ". The argument before II Peter exhorts the reader to "a vigorous pursuit of those who corrupt the simple by perverse doctrine", but it seems impossible to decide who these "corrupters" are in Stapulensis' mind at this stage. A reference to "sophistical speech" at the head of Ben Sirach 37 seems to imply that he has retained his dislike of degenerate scholasticism,<sup>(11)</sup> but one other, rather surprising detail seems to indicate that the false teachers are not necessarily the theologians of the Sorbonne. In the argument preceding Luke 10, the chapter which includes the story of Martha and Mary entertaining Christ in their house, Stapulensis refers to this couple as "Martha and Magdalen". Either he has now relinquished his debating position distinguishing this "Mary" from the "Magdalen",<sup>(12)</sup> or he has at least bowed to convention in this his last work. It seems strange that he has here



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specifically named the woman "Magdalen" when the text does not demand the use of the name, as though he were going out of his way to appear orthodox, or at least not to offend "pious ears". Does this represent his own present conviction, or is it a stance adopted to facilitate the greater good of the acceptance and free circulation of his vernacular bible?

Stapulensis' concern for the preaching of the word of God reappears in a number of places. Proverbs 33 is concerned with "the fiery torch of the word of God", and we are told that, in Job 37, "preachers are signified by the clouds, while the lightning and the rain signify the word".

Harmonising to the last, Stapulensis presents his characteristic combination of "faith" and "works" on the title-page of the New Testament, which we are told, shows us, along with the salvation achieved by Christ, "the works by which a man can be recognised and approved, both in himself and by others, as being faithful or unfaithful". (13)

Stapulensis' ecclesiology would seem to be summed up and find its highest point in the Canticle of Canticles. In both the 1530 and 1534 editions, this is the only section to appear in two-colour printing, and the whole is laid out with considerably more elaboration than the rest of the biblical text. The whole of the Canticle is set out in dialogue form, the identity of the speaker in each section being given in rubrics before it. The argument at the head of the book states that it is "a dialogue between Christ and His spouse, under the figure of Solomon and the daughter of Pharoah.... which images the most holy marriage of Christ and His Church". Among the speakers in the drama Stapulensis identifies the bride as the voice of the Church addressing Christ, or elsewhere, her companions or of the pre-elected soul desiring to be delivered. The guards who patrol the city are the persecutors of whom the Church/bride complains; and it is Christ who says to his bride catch us these little foxes referring to the faithless heretics.



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The allusions to Aquilus and Auster are Christ's invitation to the pagans to enter the Church, while the voice of the bride in that same section represents "the Church chosen out from among the pagans". The voice of the Synagogue also appears in the Canticle, and the phrase who will give you to me for my brother? is interpreted as spoken by the patriarchs to Christ. When the husband says I will go up to the palm-tree and pluck its fruits, Christ is seen to be speaking of the cross, and when he says My friends, come, eat and drink, he is speaking to the apostles. The Canticle was traditionally interpreted as a lovesong between Christ and his Church, so Stapulensis' treatment is not original. It would seem, however, to support the contention that his own mystical approach to Scripture remained the key to his attitude towards the Church up to the end of his life.

### The 1534 edition of the French Bible

A second edition of the whole bible translated into French was printed in Antwerp and published by Martin Keyser on 6 April 1534, and while the title-page is substantially the same as that of the 1530 edition, there are a number of changes in the volume which make it almost a different work. The general lay-out and printing of the work is much the same as that of the 1530 edition.<sup>(14)</sup> It is again prefaced by the text of the imperial privilege granted to Martin Keyser in 1530, and now extended for another three years. The prologue, or prefatory letter addressed to the reader, is retained, but only the first part of this text is the same as that in the 1530 edition. The previous statement of hermeneutical principles is now followed by a defence of the changes made in this edition, and an explanation of the more elaborate critical apparatus now employed. This is concluded by a brief pious exhortation. This new section of the prologue turns out to be a free and slightly abbreviated translation of a similar preface which appeared in the Latin Bible printed in Paris in 1532 by Robert Estienne and signed by him. Presumably



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it tells us little about Stapulensis' own views beyond the fact that he found its inclusion tolerable, if indeed he had any control over the matter. (15)

The list of the books of the bible which had appeared as part of the 1530 prologue has now been separated off to form a conventional list of contents furnished with the appropriate folio numbers, and seems to replace the 1530 table of "The Subject Matter of the Two Testaments"; the arrangement of this list of contents resembles that of Estienne's 1532 Latin bible. The Hebrew, Greek and Latin versions of scriptural names which appeared at the head of the chapters of the 1530 edition derived apparently from Pagninus, reappears in the 1534 edition, as does the list of "diverse and obscure readings" presented in 1530. The table of liturgical Epistles and Gospels is retained, but a list of the years from the foundation of the world has been added to this in the 1534 edition.

In the 1534 edition the translation of the scriptural text itself has been much more extensively revised; many variant readings are now offered in the margin for the reader's own choice in addition to the limited corrections in the text itself which had been made in the 1530 edition. These readings are a selection from those found in Estienne's 1532 Latin bible, together with some taken from Joannis Campensis, Enchiridion Psalmorum...Concionem Praeterea Salomonis Ecclesiastae per eundem Campensem ex Habraico traductum (Paris, 1532). Detailed analysis of this revision might perhaps reveal information about the shift, if any, in Stapulensis' views at the end of his life, but collation of the entire text of the two translations has been judged to lie outside the scope of the present thesis. Such collation has only been made for a number of selected passages taken mainly from the New Testament. (16)

Selection was made on the basis of what previous study of Stapulensis' works had suggested as sensitive or significant areas, and sought to cover most types of material in the New Testament. It seems true to say that in no case did the later translation of a passage convey a shift of meaning or an intensified significance, (a conclusion



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which might have been expected in view of the provision of opportunity for the reader to make his own choice of readings in many places.) In all the examples examined, where there had been a change of vocabulary or style it seems to have been dictated by a literary or "humanist" motive rather than by a clearly theological one.<sup>(17)</sup> If it be accepted that this re-translation of the text into French is Stapulensis' own work,<sup>(18)</sup> it seems to demonstrate only that his humanist interest in the production of better texts persisted until the end of his life, as did his concern for the circulation of a good vernacular edition.

Two further major changes in the 1534 edition are the inclusion of brief exegetical notes in the margin of the text, and the insertion at the beginning of the work of two pages of material entitled The Content of Scripture. This section differs radically from the "Subject-Matter of the Two Testaments" which appeared at the beginning of the 1530 edition, and consists of a summary of the basic tenets of Christian doctrine which the scriptures teach. It is couched in largely scriptural phraseology and supported by constant scriptural references in the margin. It is in fact a somewhat extended French translation of the similar Latin text which had appeared at the beginning of Estienne's Latin Bible in 1532. If it is presumed that Estienne was the actual author of this text its relationship to Stapulensis' own views would seem to be as ambiguous as that of the new prologue of 1534. The marginal notes added to the body of the 1534 text raise the same query: Stapulensis' "brief arguments" at the head of the books or chapters of the 1530 edition have been retained in 1534 and some authors have assumed that the new marginal notes in 1534 should also be attributed to him. Analysis of the material however suggests a common authorship for The Content of Scripture and the exegetical annotations in the margin of the text; perhaps the marginal annotations should also be



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attributed to Estienne. There seems little evidence either to support or deny the suggestion that Stapulensis might have composed the Content as a preface to Estienne's Latin Bible of 1532: the assumption that Estienne was himself the author would seem more logical. If so, only very tentative conclusions can be drawn from these features of the 1534 bible about Stapulensis' own views at the end of his life. (19)

Themes already familiar in Stapulensis' works do appear in the Content. Its claim that Jesus Christ was frequently promised in the Old Testament is entirely consistent with Stapulensis' permanently Christocentric approach, as is the assertion that Christ was, and that he offered, the one and only true and effective sacrifice. The concept of faith presented here, as a lively confidence in God and in the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ, is familiar. (20) The relationship between faith and works indicated here is recognisable as that of Stapulensis: salvation in Jesus Christ comes from the Father's free grace and not from works; works of charity towards one's neighbour are the result of the gift of faith; this faith is shown in such works to the extent that those who do not do them demonstrate that they have no faith in Jesus Christ, and at the Last Judgement the sheep will be separated from the goats on the basis of the actions they have done in the flesh. It is concluded from this that those who receive the gift of faith receive also the gift of the Holy Spirit as a pledge of eternal life; such a pledge does not however amount to a rigid doctrine of predestination. These elements, together with the assertion that Christ is the one mediator and only foundation on which the Church can be built, (21) are entirely in tune with what has previously been discovered of Stapulensis' views.

Other elements in the Content strike a slightly different note, though one not intrinsically alien to what we know of Stapulensis' mind. The opening paragraph, on the sovereign inscrutability of God's power and design is not a familiar theme; the tone of

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some of the remarks on the subject of faith,<sup>(22)</sup> and the insistence on "deliverance through Jesus Christ and through him alone", are not apparently characteristic of Stapulensis, and the fact that Jesus Christ "was sent not because of anyone's good works, but from the Father's free grace", is an aspect of the matter that has not appeared in Stapulensis' previous works.

Still other elements of the 'Content' seem to be even more at variance with what has seemed to be the stance of Stapulensis, and are somewhat reminiscent of the characteristic positions of more "protestant" reformers. It is pointed out that in Old Testament times human nature was not capable of recognising itself as sinful, and kept the law only under constraint and out of fear, whereas in the New Testament dispensation Christ has brought men true peace and repose of conscience, so that they now serve the Father without constraint or fear, and from their own free will.<sup>(23)</sup>

Analysis of the marginal notes in the 1534 edition yields a result similar to that indicated above for the 'Content'. The constant harmonisation of the positions of "faith" and "works" reappears,<sup>(24)</sup> and the presentation of concupiscence with its relation to mortification is familiar (on Mk.1). In many places the presentation of justification and forgiveness offers nothing strange,<sup>(25)</sup> and at times is possibly even reminiscent of Stapulensis' doctrine of Christiformity.<sup>(26)</sup> The explicit equation of "apostle" with "bishop", together with a statement that the function of the latter is to "govern the word of God" (on Acts 1) causes no surprise, nor do the two significant references to the nature of the Church (on Matt.16 and Eph.5). Likewise the assertions that the living bread from heaven is the word of God (on Jn.6), and that confession means to declare our sins to one another (on Jas.5) repeat ideas already encountered in Stapulensis' works. The characteristically reforming theme of the superiority of the word of God over all human wisdom recurs (on Lk.10 and Jude), along with the assertion that "sound doctrine" is that which is



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"according to the Gospel" (on I Cor.1 and I Tim.1), and an exhortation to preach it boldly and without fear (on Is.61 and Acts 9). Two notes at least would seem to indicate that the writer has little sympathy for any idea of rejection of the Church's traditional structure: the divisive "dogs" of Philippians 3 are interpreted as "those who rend and tear the Church of God by doctrines";<sup>(27)</sup> the note on Ecclesiasticus 10 defines an apostate as one who "removes himself from subjection to his superior and rebels against his will".<sup>(28)</sup>

Traces of what might be called more "protestant" positions can also be detected. The "sin of concupiscence" is on one occasion closely associated with that of "unbelief" (on Ps.36). A priest is once defined as "one who is trained in doctrine" (on I Pet.5), and God is said to be just, not so much in himself but rather in so far as he justifies us, (on Ps.114). Likewise, the good Christian, even if he still has sin, is not condemned, if he believes that Christ's justice is his own, that Christ has removed the curse of the law and washed him in his own satisfaction (on Rom.9). A similar note is struck in the interpretation of "Abraham's bosom": it is the repose of the saints or believers who had faith in the promise made to Abraham, into whose company are received all who die in this faith, (on Lk.16).<sup>(29)</sup>

In a number of places the marginal notes seem to re-echo the Content. The statement that to be built upon this rock (pierre) is to place total confidence and hope in Christ (on I Pet.2), recalls the insistence that no other foundation can be laid except Jesus Christ. An interesting distinction between "grace" and "gifts",<sup>(30)</sup> can be related to what the Content said about the gift of the Holy Spirit being followed by other pledges of salvation. The remarks about peace of conscience, and about the performance of good works declaring our election to other men (on II Pet.1) are virtually repeated in both places.

The two compositions would seem to offer three categories of material: some parts are entirely

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consistent with, and even verbally similar to Stapulensis' known views; some elements are expressed in a rather different manner but are not essentially in conflict with his position; some elements seem to reflect a position not to be detected in his earlier works. If these texts are Stapulensis' own composition it would seem undeniable that by the end of his life he had come to accept a position on some points of doctrine more akin to that of Luther than in his earlier days. If he made the French translation of the Latin texts of the Content, or even if he at least consented to its inclusion in his own 1534 vernacular edition of the Bible, it would seem that he was willing to express his position in these terms at the end of his life. On the other hand, the 1534 French edition of the Bible, like that of 1530, bears no signature explicitly attributing it to Stapulensis, and it can be seriously suggested that he may have had little or no hand in its production, content in his old age to leave this work to others.<sup>(31)</sup>

It seems that the only clear conclusion to be drawn is that at the end of his life he was in some degree associated with those sympathetic to more "reformist" positions than can be detected in his own earlier writings.



## CHAPTER 6      FOOTNOTES:

- (1) The copies consulted are in the British Library, London.
- (2) See biographical details in chapter 1 above.
- (3) For his 1528 and 1530 translations of the Old Testament Stapulensis made use of the Bible Historiée, the French translation commissioned by Jean de Rely in 1487 (identified and dated by Stapulensis himself in his Epistre Exhortatoire which prefaced the second part of his own French New Testament in 1523), and of the Latin Vulgate in the edition of Sanctus (Xantes) Pagninus printed in Lyons, 29 Jan. 1527/8, and based on a Hebrew text. See A. Laune, Des Secours Dont Lefèvre D'Etaples s'est servi pour sa traduction Française de l'Ancien Testament, BSHPF, L (1901) pp. 595-607. For the translation of the New Testament into French in 1523 Stapulensis had made use of Erasmus' 1516 Novum Instrumentum, though the corrections of the Vulgate which he introduced on this basis disappeared from subsequent editions, perhaps as a result of pressure from the Sorbonne. See Paul Quievreux, La Traduction de Nouveau Testament de Lefèvre D'Etaples (Le Cateau, 1894). The 1530 one-volume translation was based on these same sources, though it included some slight amendments of over-literal translation which had appeared in the 1528 Old Testament. See Laune, op.cit.
- (4) Detailed collation of the actual text of the 1534 translation with that of 1530, or of either with other near-contemporary translations, has been deemed to lie outside the scope of the present thesis, useful though such collation might be. Cf. Laune, op.cit. p. 596 for remarks on this.
- (5) "fidèle et craintif"; cf. chapter 3, note (11) for the use of the word "fidèle."
- (6) Cf. chapter 2 above.
- (7) Stapulensis' list of canonical books coincided with that commonly accepted in the sixteenth century, as defined at the Council of Florence (Decretum pro Jacobitis 4 February 1442), and as subsequently defined by the Council of Trent (8 April 1546), except in one particular. He included the First and Second Books of Esdras in his first category - that of known authorship, and accepted as canonical, but considered as "apochryphal" (i.e. of unknown authorship) the Third and Fourth Books of Esdras. The status of the latter two was still ambiguous at Florence, and they were excluded from the canon by Trent, though still reverently retained in subsequent printings of the Vulgate, in an appendix headed "Apochrypha". It is noteworthy that he does not now include in the list some items which he had accepted as "authentic" at an earlier stage in his career -

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See chapter 3 above, in connection with his Commentary on the Pauline Epistles.

- (8) His stance with reference to the canon of Scripture is obviously in contrast with that of Luther, despite his own insistence on the primacy of the Word of God as the instrument of reform in the Church.
- (9) Both editions of the Bible include a calendar, giving the feast of a saint for every day of the year, an interesting fact in view of the alleged reason for Stapulensis' abandonment of his work Agones Martyrum in 1519; (see above chapter 1). Both calendars are identical except for the correction of misprints, but there is a difference between the Tables of Epistles and Gospels in the two editions: that of 1530 lists these according to the Meaux lectionary only, while that of 1534 usually adds the reference to the Gospel according to the Rome lectionary when this differs from that of Meaux. The 1523 edition of the New Testament in French had included a similar table, which gave the Meaux lectionary first, but always included both the Rome and Paris variants for both Epistle and Gospel.
- (10) E.g: Deut.XVIII, 2 Sam.VII, I Paralip.XVII, Job XIX, Isaias passim; also at the head of one or more chapters in Jeremias, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, Osee, Joel, Micheas, Habbacuc, Sophon., Agg., Zach., Malachias.
- (11) See chapter 2 above.
- (12) See chapter 1 above, concerning the Magdalen Dispute.
- (13) See above chapter 3, note (11).
- (14) The basic type-setting for the two editions is the same, though some misprints in the 1530 edition have been corrected in that of 1534, e.g: 'Meurice' to 'Maurice', 'Mathieu' to 'Matthieu'. The spelling in the two editions varies with no apparent consistency in the use of 'i' and 'y', or in the use of double or single letters. The use of capital letters also varies with no apparent consistency. The illustrated capital letters are the same in each edition, but the other illustrations are not; it has been suggested that a slightly polemical illustration which appears in the 1534 edition "escaped Lefèvre's notice", see M. Lortsch, Histoire de la Bible en France (Paris, 1910) p. 99, and Pannier, op.cit. p. 541.
- (15) "The possibility that the aged Lefèvre, on retiring to Nérac, left the revision of his French translation of the Bible entirely in Robert's, (i.e. Estienne) hands, though far from certain, is plausible" (Rice: Pref. Ep. p.531, See Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, p.116 note 74 : "...Lefèvre est vraisemblablement l'auteur des dernières revisions. Le prologue est identique à celui de l'édition de 1530..." It would seem that Bédouelle did not read beyond the first paragraph of the 1534 prologue!



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- (16) List of passages collated in the two editions:  
sections from:  
Matthew, chapters 3, 4, 8, 13, 16, 18, 20, 26.  
Mark, chapters 1 and 14.  
Luke, chapters 3, 9, 10, 16, 20, 22, 24.  
John, chapters 1, 5, 6, 11, 14, 21.  
Acts, chapter 10.  
Romans, chapters 3, 8, 12.  
I Corinthians, chapters 1, 4, 15.  
Ephesians, chapters 3 & 5.  
Philippians, chapter 1.  
Colossians, chapter 3.  
James, chapters 1 & 4.  
I Peter, chapters 1, 2, 4, 5.  
II Peter, chapters 1 & 2.  
I John, chapters 2 & 5.  
3 John, (verses) 8 - 10.  
Jude, chapter 1.  
  
Also sections from Psalms, 3, 50, 64, 93, 130.
- (17) One further interesting printing alteration in the 1534 edition is the adoption of a capital initial letter for "Pierre" where the 1530 edition has a small one in Matt. 16:     ...sus cet Pierre  
j'edifierai mon eglise...
- (18) See Laune, op.cit. p. 598: "...Lefèvre retraduisait en français la bible de Robert Estienne..."; also Pannier, op.cit. p. 534 and 541: "...C'est la seconde édition de la bible complète traduite en français par Lefèvre D'Etaples...La traduction a été non seulement révisée, mais enrichie de nouveaux commentaires et annotations par Lefèvre entre 1530 et 1534...". Pannier seems to have accepted the judgement of Laune, op.cit. p. 606: "...L'étrangeté de certaines corrections...portaient en quelque sorte la marque de l'éclectisme parfois arbitraire de Lefèvre...". I am inclined to give more weight to the view expressed by Laune in his immediately preceding sentence: "On pourrait même douter que l'édition française de 1534, presque semblable à l'édition latine de Robert Estienne, fût l'oeuvre de Lefèvre D'Etaples...". Cf. note (15) above.
- (19) In Estienne's 1532 Latin bible, the Content itself bears no author's name, but it follows immediately Estienne's prefatory letter, addressed to the reader, which does bear his name. Pannier, op.cit. p. 534, attributes the authorship of the Content directly to Stapulensis citing in support of this view M.O. Douen, Les Premiers Professions de foi des protestantes français, BSHPF, XLIII (1894) p. 448. See also Lucien Febvre, Dolet Propagateur de L'Evangile, Bibliothèque d'Humanisme & Ren. VI (1945) pp. 115-6, where it is assumed that Stapulensis made the French translation of Estienne's Latin text. M.N. Weiss, Les Premiers Professions... BSHPF, XLIII, (1894) pp. 57 and 455, upholds Estienne's own authorship.

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- (20) Comparison with the 1532 Latin text indicates that the French translation of the Content which appears in the 1534 bible is a fuller and more colloquial presentation of substantially the same subject matter. In a few places, however, the more extended expression of some topics may be significant. The single Latin word "fides" is emphasised in translation by being rendered as "une vive foy. assurance et fiance" and on a second occasion "foy et fiance". Similarly the French version adds several lines on the subject of how Jesus Christ is the one true sacrifice replacing all the figurative ceremonies and sacrifices of the Old Law.
- (21) The French text of the Content adds an entire paragraph, absent from the Latin original, emphasising the unique mediatorship of Christ. While its presence, and some of its terminology are interesting: e.g: "...Semblablement nostre grand Evesque et seul Mediateur...", it does not reveal an aspect of the Christocentric attitude that we have not met before.
- (22) See note (20) above.
- (23) The Latin text of the Content makes no mention of the topic that men kept the law unwillingly and by constraint under the old dispensation, though it does mention that, under the new dispensation, men may serve God freely in holiness and justice all the days of their lives. The French version, by contrast, adds several lines extending the expression of the fear and constraint which characterised the Old Testament period.
- (24) E.g. on Matt.20; Acts 9, 15; Rom.8; II Pet.1; Jas.1.
- (25) E.g. on Rom.8.
- (26) See on I Cor.6: "...Estre iustifiez est estre faictz iustes et rendus sauvez: et il est quant nous sommes aornez (sic, ? adornés) de la divine ymage, cest adire de tout vertu... Et cest amour nous conforme totalement a la divine volonte...".
- (27) See on Philippians 3: "...Par ces chiens icy sont entendus les heretiques qui deschirent et divisent par doctrines leglise de Dieu...". It is perhaps interesting that it does not say "By their doctrines" as though reproving some particular set of doctrines; rather it seems to reflect a horror of splits and schisms in general.
- (28) See on Ecclesiasticus 10: "...Apostat est celuy qui se retire de la subiection de son superieur et est rebelle a sa volonte...".



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- (29) "Le sein de Abraham est le repos des saintz ou des croyans: ascavoir la foy en la promesse de ceste semence par laquelle toutes gens debvoient estre beneictes...". Cf. note (13) above.
- (30) See on Rom.5: "...Lapostre icy met différence entre la grâce et le don: appellant grace la misericorde et faveur par lequel il ayme Christ, et tous les saintz en Christ et pour lamour de Christ. En après dautant quil ayme, il ne peult quil ne donne ses dons a ceulx dont il a misericorde...". Cf. Content: "...Car certainement ceste foy la, delaquelle nous croyons que Jesus Christ est venu en ce monde pour sauver les pecheurs, est ung don de Dieu, se sy grande efficace, que ceulx qui lont desyrent faire et acomplyr les oeuvres de charite envers ung chascun, comme Jesu Christ a faict envers eulx. Car apres avoir receu ceste foy, Dieu baille son Esperit, duquel il marque tous ceulx a qui il donne foy, et est les arres que certainement aurons lheritage de vie eternelle...".
- (31) Cf. notes (15), (18) and (19) above. A further question might be raised as to how far the work begun during Stapulensis' sojourn in Strasbourg in 1525-6 ultimately contributed to the 1530 and 1534 editions; cf. chapter 1 above. If he preserved any of the material translated at that time perhaps some influence of his hosts and associates in Strasbourg should also be traced in these two single volume editions. On the other hand there is some slight evidence that he positively resisted such influence; see letter from Gerard Roussel in Strasbourg to Nicolas Le Sueur in Meaux, December 1525, Herminjard I, No. 168, p. 415, with note 20 given there: "...Deinde hic occupamur aliquot, ut integra biblia, non ex vulgata editione, sed consultis hebraeis, graecis et iis quae in germanicam linguam tralata sunt, in vestram transfundantur linguam... Coracinus (i.e. Stapulensis) suo more pergit, volens id praestare in Veteri quod in Novo, nec a nobis terreri potuit, ob rei difficultatem et linguarum imperitiam, ut desisteret, et curaret quae suae essent harenae - praesertim cum hic essent qui melius id praestare possent, nec esse (sic) in Veteri perinde ac in Iure Novo, nec tamen deesse quos male haberet versio illa sua, ut non admodum tersa, ita graecae fidei plerumque dissentiens...".

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Stapulensis' patterns of thought, and so also his ecclesiology, were inevitably shaped by his surroundings. The university of Paris formed his initial outlook on the Christian and spiritual life, and the political situation in early sixteenth century France, together with royal patronage and protection, shielded him from violent crisis for a considerable period, so that his views matured gradually during a long life. His association with Bishop Briçonnet in the diocese of Meaux added a practical and pastoral dimension to his concept of the Church. Perhaps it was this somewhat sheltered situation which caused him to see the wholly exterior threat from the Turks as such a serious issue, even in the context of contemporary decadence, corruption and abuse within the Church. It seems clear that he never thought of reform in terms of rupture or secession, but only in terms of revitalising the existing structures and forms of the Church as he found them.

Ostensibly Stapulensis rejected the scholastic philosophy and theology still current in the Paris of his youth. The intellectually stimulating and theologically useful thirteenth-century debate between Nominalists and Realists had declined in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries into arid metaphysics divorced from a rather uncritical acceptance of divine revelation as developed in the Church's tradition, where works like The Sentences of Peter Lombard took precedence over the scriptures. The Nominalist school of philosophy regained the upper hand in Paris in the late fifteenth century after a period of obscurity, and in 1476, ten years before Stapulensis became a Master of Arts, a royal ban on the printing of the seven books of The Dialogues of William of Occam, was lifted. It seems probable therefore that the scholasticism he experienced, and rejected, was a rather sterile nominalism, exhibiting a vivid and sophisticated dialectic but offering little spiritual and religious nourishment or satisfaction.<sup>(1)</sup> His works, however, frequently demonstrate a debt to the



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healthy scholasticism of an earlier age; scholastic terminology, distinctions and syllogisms are to be found, and he was himself able to distinguish between true and false dialectic;<sup>(2)</sup> it seems likely that he owed a considerable, though unconscious, debt to Aquinas and the scholastic heritage.

A child of the Renaissance, Stapulensis' reaction was that of other contemporary scholars, a determined search for the legitimate role of human reason in the intellectual and religious sphere, though as an essentially Christian humanist, he worked out precisely the limitations of that role, and situated it in a carefully ordered hermeneutical hierarchy. The demand for critical editions of basic works, for the use of original languages, and the publication of ancient classical and patristic texts, was a corollary of this "rationalist" approach. So too was the assertion of the right to criticise such things as the supposed authorship of the Vulgate, the application of new criteria to the exegesis of scripture, and the assumption that all well-disposed readers could understand the Gospel for themselves if it were available in their own language. The practical application of such principles was of course made possible by the development of the printing press, illustrated by Stapulensis' long association with the printers Henri and Robert Estienne in particular. His work was also facilitated by the friendship and assistance of a number of devoted disciples, some of whom, like Johannes Solidus, travelled about Europe collecting and copying works for him, while others such as Josse Clichtove, bore the brunt of much of the editorial and compository work, while also preparing editions and original works of their own.<sup>(3)</sup> Stapulensis also derived stimulus and encouragement from the esteem of other scholars like Reuchlin, and seems to have been conscious of the reality of what has been called the "Republic of Letters".<sup>(4)</sup>

It has to be admitted that Stapulensis was not a scholar of the first rank. His linguistic abilities seem

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to have been limited, though his attempts to make faithful and conscientious translations need not be doubted, and if the 1534 revision of the French Bible text be accepted as his own, it would seem that he went on learning in this field throughout his life. His critical faculty was somewhat inhibited by a naive and conventional piety. Not merely did he accept the traditional canon of scripture defined at the Council of Florence, but in his earlier career included various spurious works, such as the Epistle to the Laodiceans and the correspondence between Paul and Seneca, prompted largely it seems, by his veneration for apostolic writings. The same factor was the cause of one of the most far-reaching influences in his whole life, his veneration for the works of the Pseudo-Dionisius, whom he believed have been the disciple of St. Paul. A modification of some of these views in his later career would imply that here too he was capable of learning from others as his work progressed, and it has been suggested that a more rigorous use of scriptural texts can be detected by 1518.<sup>(5)</sup> It would seem that his dispute with Erasmus demonstrates how his Christological piety controlled his exegesis, illustrating his order of priorities as well as the limitations of his scholarship. Two traits which seem incompatible to a later age were in fact harmonised in Stapulensis, and the key to this situation seems to be his Christological exegesis of the whole of scripture, Old Testament as well as New. The fact that he saw Christ as the centre of all scripture gave rise to a mystique of the words of scripture, and led to a very high evaluation of the texts themselves, and so, in turn, of the various translations and editions. His Christological piety was the basis of his appreciation of scripture, and so inevitably preceded it in importance as well as in time. Given his mystical approach to scripture and his concept of inspiration, it was logical that the same piety which led him to seek Christ in the scriptures legitimated for him the use of other visionary material in what was supposedly a rational approach to theological study.



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Stapulensis' order of priorities and the controlling factor of his Christian piety meant that his criticisms of the Church were never expressed with the biting acuteness of Erasmus, or the blunt force to be found in the writings of Luther, but a certain rationalism is apparent in his attitude towards some practices of popular piety and liturgy. The critical approach of the Magdalen pamphlets is reflected in a number of passages in his scriptural works deploring disproportionate devotion to the saints, and he formulated a carefully correct position with regard to devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. While Farel's statement that superstition was the reason for his discontinuing his work on the Agones Martyrum in 1519 may be too sweeping, it seems possible that his decision was influenced by a fear of encouraging unhealthy devotional practices. It could be claimed that in his own life he achieved a successful balance between rational enquiry and traditional piety, which points to his fundamental grasp of the true nature of the Church as the mystical body of Christ, capable of integrating various facets of human religious practice. Despite his assertion of a humanistic freedom of enquiry and research, he was by no means independent of Church tradition, even though he did qualify its role in theological study.<sup>(6)</sup>

Such a rationalist attitude, however, inevitably fell foul of the sixteenth century "establishment", different elements of which opposed him for various reasons. The conflict between the scholastic and the humanist approaches was a magnification of a familiar species of academic wrangle. Paris had seen a repeated cycle of such struggles between Nominalists and Realists for three centuries, but the humanist outlook added a much more far-reaching criticism of methods and sources in the study of both philosophy and theology, and so evoked a correspondingly greater reaction from the Sorbonne. The Sorbonne, the senior faculty in the university that had come to be considered almost synonymous with the study of theology, was widely

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accepted as a judge of theological orthodoxy,<sup>(7)</sup> but its criteria were obscurantist in that little or no distinction seems to have been made between the assessment of the method and the content, of works submitted to its judgement. It seemed incapable of evolving a new methodology from within and adaptation was eventually forced on it from without.<sup>(8)</sup> Noel Beda, Stapulensis' long-standing opponent, seems to have epitomised in himself the attitude of the Sorbonne, and added something more which it is difficult not to see as antagonism arising from personal jealousy; but he must perhaps be credited with a sincere, if misguided, fear of heresy. He seems to have had an overmastering fear of "Lutheranism" and the supposed spread of Lutheran ideas. It was this obsession which prompted most of the opposition to Stapulensis, and also provoked much of the contemporary legislation concerning the censorship of books which was a further weapon for attack on his work.

St. John Fisher, who took up the cudgels in the Magdalen dispute, represented a much more respectable, if somewhat unenlightened, version of the opposition. He was genuinely concerned about upsetting the traditional piety of the faithful, and presented a serious argument that the faith and confidence of those less able to think out the question for themselves would be undermined by the suggestion that the Church had espoused and celebrated erroneous interpretations of the Gospel story. Moreover a fundamental item of preaching in the area of morals and salvation was at stake in the Magdalen case, the power of God's grace to transform the repentant sinner into the great saint. In these circumstances, disagreement with the "establishment" was taken as tantamount to heresy, and it is interesting to note that what little evidence there is suggests that the authorities in Rome were at times less obscurantist than the universities of Paris, Cologne or Louvain.<sup>(9)</sup>

By 1520 however "heresy" meant "Lutheranism". Clearly Stapulensis was interested in Luther's career and his writings; it is equally clear that his own out-



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look was not unduly influenced by them, and that the actual connections between the two were not particularly close. Nevertheless he was labelled "Lutheran" in his own day, and has continued to be regarded by many since as a "protestant" or a "heretic", though it seems possible to show that his own characteristic ideas of Church reform, distinctively different from those of other Protestant reformers, were not essentially heretical. These ideas evolved gradually,<sup>(10)</sup> just as there was a gradual and consistent development in his own life and career. Dissatisfaction with scholastic philosophy in Paris had turned his mind towards the works of Aristotle, where his mystical inclination had found a religious significance. His interest in ancient texts had subjected him to the influence of the Pseudo-Dionisius whose neoplatonism had proved sympathetic to his own temperament, enabled him to synthesise his mystical and rational tendencies and helped him to retain an appreciation of the contemplative life.<sup>(11)</sup> His turning to scripture as the "only source of true blessedness"<sup>(12)</sup> was the natural development of these elements. They had provided the basis for his high estimate of the word of God, and also of his particular version of the "senses" of scripture, which saw the sense intended by the Holy Spirit (and therefore necessarily spiritual) as the literal sense.

Such an approach to scripture in which the spiritual message addressed by God to the human soul is seen as inseparable from the narrative and linguistic expression by which it is conveyed, is a striking example of Stapulensis' habitual tendency to synthesise and harmonise, to distinguish but not to oppose the various facets of a question, a tendency which reappears in many areas of his work, and notably in what we have called his ecclesiology. For him the hypostatic union of two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ was the supreme example of such a synthesis, and the key to the nature of the Church. As the mystical body of that same Jesus Christ, a body where

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many members cooperate to form one whole, the Church necessarily exhibits variety in unity, a unity achieved both by means of an ordered, structured polity, and by the bond of charity. Universality, one whole embracing all such varied aspects, is an essential characteristic of that mystical body; if the concept of variety in unity be really appreciated, sects or schisms are seen not merely as unnecessary but as antithetical to the very nature of the Church. Stapulensis certainly feared heresy, but for him the word denoted not so much a doctrine which differed from his own understanding of orthodox Christian truth, as an outlook alien to the very nature of the Church, which he saw exemplified in the Tartars. For him such a Church presupposed an authoritative, structured hierarchy, but any sophisticated analysis of how far such authority extends does not seem to have been part of his thinking. The most topical ecclesiastical controversy of the day, the relative powers of pope and council, seems to have been wholly ignored by him, though in the context of the Reuchlin dispute he distinguished between an academic and an ecclesiastical judgement, perhaps with the implication that he would have been prepared to submit to the latter, a position he also professed in the Magdalen pamphlets with regard to the doctrinal authority of Pope Leo X.<sup>(13)</sup> That this posture did not seem to him inconsistent with his demand for scholarly freedom to revise, criticise and correct accepted scriptural texts is less surprising if considered in the light of the dignity and inspiration he claimed for all baptised members of the Church,<sup>(14)</sup> and his appreciation of the variety which contributed to its richness.<sup>(15)</sup>

Such an ecclesiology comes closer to that made current in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and summed up in Vatican II's constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, than to the concepts matured in the period of the Reformation. Lumen Gentium sees the Church as the primordial sacrament where an outward,



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visible structure is the inseparable vehicle of an inner, invisible reality. Though Stapulensis did not use the word "sacrament" precisely of the Church as such, he did use it in a similar way in that it sometimes denoted the whole economy of salvation and not merely one particular liturgical rite.<sup>(16)</sup> If the Church is the primordial sacrament, its life and functions will be focussed in particular sacraments, and Stapulensis retained the traditional list of seven such sacraments finalised by Peter Lombard in the twelfth century. He exhibited a precise understanding of the concept of sacrament in which outward symbol or sign and inward reality are essentially related but not confused,<sup>(17)</sup> and his aspiration to reform current sacramental practice was no denial of this. Rather it sought to redress the balance which had often tipped in favour of disproportionate emphasis on the outward sign, as can be clearly seen in what he has to say, for instance, about the anointing of the sick.<sup>(18)</sup> The reform of attitude and practice he there advocated has been precisely effected by Vatican II.<sup>(19)</sup> Similarly much of what he said about the priesthood of all the faithful, the anointing of all the baptised with a spiritual unction which gives them an innate understanding of the faith, the correct usage of the Eucharist, the use of the vernacular in liturgy and the emphasis on scriptural preaching, foreshadowed the reforms brought about in the Roman Catholic Church by the Second Vatican Council.<sup>(20)</sup>

Stapulensis' ability to harmonise and synthesise diverse aspects of a topic reappears constantly. He holds a doctrine of election in the light of God's providence which does not imply any rigid predestinarianism, but allows full scope for human freedom of will; justification and salvation are wholly due to God's mercy and Christ's merits, yet man's response is neither useless nor unnecessary. Original sin is wiped out by baptism, yet its effects remain in man. In all such matters the harmonisation is achieved not by sophisti-

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cated argument, nor yet by naive refusal to see the apparent contradictions; rather it is achieved by a deep, if not always fully expressed, consideration of the matter in the context of the whole plan of salvation. Though his language may be halting and at times inadequate, Stapulensis did live with a mature reflection on what sin and the actual situation of sinful man is and what the providential plan of a loving God really entails; clearly he had a vivid glimpse of the marvel of the state of salvation in Christ. His concept of christiformity is the climax of his own mystical ponderings, and sums up his doctrine of salvation. It differs from Luther's notion of the marriage between the soul and Christ, chiefly perhaps in two ways;<sup>(21)</sup> Stapulensis is talking about a continuous process by which men become christiform, and this process effects a real transformation in them. Moreover this transformation is brought about in and through the Church, as it has been discerned in his writings.<sup>(22)</sup> Where the role of the Church is not fully explicit this would seem to be taken for granted rather than ignored or denied. His constant emphasis on personal conversion, metanoia, on faith, hope and charity, on personal prayer and devotion, illustrated by the constant prayerful ejaculations in his own works, is individual, but not therefore individualistic; they are not in opposition to the institutional Church. In the Latin Psalter it is his frequently expressed desire that the individual conversion and devotion which he believed had characterised the primitive Church, should again spread throughout the Church as a whole.

Stapulensis' reforming aspirations emphasised the centrality of faith, not in opposition to other elements in the life of the Church, but as the inner force which would revivify them. His was not a sola fide position but one of faith essentially associated with everything else in the Christian life, a fact apparent in his treatment of the sacraments, and illustrated also by the wide range of shades of meaning discernible in his use of



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the words "faith" and "faithful".<sup>(23)</sup> It seems bitterly ironical that the association of faith with hope and charity, a recurrent feature of his writings, was one of the items censured as "heretical" because "contrary to the Apostolic text" by the Sorbonne in 1525.<sup>(24)</sup> The wish that such a vivid and vivifying faith should be nourished by evangelical preaching was the natural outcome of the combination of his mystical tendency with his pastoral concern, stimulated by like-minded associates at Meaux.<sup>(25)</sup> Emphasis on the centrality of scripture was the logical consequence of this and common sense demanded that the Bible should be available in the vernacular. Even his assumption that all could understand sufficiently to profit from reading the text for themselves was less naive than the Sorbonne supposed when it condemned the "pernicious" practice of translating the Bible into the vernacular;<sup>(26)</sup> his own answer to this in his preface to his French New Testament is difficult to counter.<sup>(27)</sup> He was anxious to provide vernacular scriptures for personal reading and vernacular psalms for private prayer; it is interesting that he does not seem to have advocated a wholly vernacular public liturgy, even after he had experienced this in Strasbourg. Since he left no comment on that experience his reaction to it is a matter for speculation, but it might not be too far-fetched to suggest that as a Frenchman in exile he came to appreciate the disadvantages, and possible divisiveness, of local vernacular liturgies, as well as the unifying potentiality of universal Latin.

Emphasis on the centrality of scripture reading and evangelical preaching did not constitute a sola scriptura stance, and passages in Stapulensis' works which might seem to be taking up such a position are commonly contrasting scriptural study with human study, rather than with other forms of devotion or religious practice.<sup>(28)</sup> It is true that in a given passage Stapulensis often seems to discuss, and pronounce on, a topic, such as the correct attitude towards the intercession of the saints, solely

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in the light of scriptural criteria. However, it is clear that within the limited context of one work, or one section of a work, he allows the keynote of that scriptural passage to dictate the trend of his own thoughts. Thus his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans inevitably gives the impression of a sola fide doctrine, while his commentary on St. James gives the opposite impression. Again what the Epistle of St. James has to say about the anointing of the sick, or the confession of sins, leads him into something hardly less than a diatribe on the contemporary usage of those sacraments, which in isolation could suggest that he was more than ready to abandon their practice altogether. All such passages should be considered as part of the overall picture to be gained from a study of all his scriptural works. Moreover just as his comments take on the "tone" of the work under discussion, so too they seem to have been adapted to the likely audience, as far as this can be judged from the contrast, for instance, between the tone of the Gospel Commentary and the Sunday Homilies, bearing in mind the composite authorship of the latter work.

If Stapulensis had his own concept of the Church and of what measures of reform should be adopted within it, he obviously did not work in total isolation from other contemporary reformers, though their influence on him seems in general to have been slight, despite inferences to the contrary drawn by some scholars.<sup>(29)</sup> He retained an interest in Luther's work long after the latter had apparently lost any admiration for Stapulensis, but what direct influence there was seems to have been exerted on Luther by Stapulensis rather than conversely.<sup>(30)</sup> However the suggestion that Stapulensis' anagogical exegesis of scripture, which virtually by-passes and ignores the role of the Church brings him closer to the outlook of Luther, seems inappropriate, since the premise seems to be untenable.<sup>(31)</sup> Enough has been said to demonstrate that Stapulensis did not by-pass or ignore the role of the Church, and his work would not seem to be the direct



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source of any tendency in Luther to diminish the function of the institutional Church.

It has been noted that the career and outlook of Philip Melancthon display some superficial similarities with those of Stapulensis. A moderate reformer who sought to conciliate extremes, Melancthon did not however seem to consider the integral hierarchical structure of the Church as an essential element in its nature, and in this he would seem to differ substantially from Stapulensis. Melancthon also retained a role for the works of Aristotle in his programme of Christian education, but this similarity with Stapulensis seems to be equally superficial, for Melancthon saw the Philosopher's works simply as an objective educational instrument and did not endow them with the religious significance that Stapulensis found there. (32)

The suggestion has also been made that the "rationalistic flavour of Stapulensis' hermeneutical method, derived from the Pseudo-Dionisius, approaches that of Zwingli and Oecolampadius". (33) Again the premise seems untenable; the role of reason in Stapulensis' hermeneutic was integrated with other elements in such a way as to preclude its being a direct attack on either the tradition or the teaching authority of the Church. Whether or not he unwittingly contributed to the hermeneutical principles of other reformers cannot be determined here. It is difficult to draw firm conclusions about Stapulensis' contacts with the Rhineland and Swiss reformers, some of whom he met during his exile in Strasbourg in 1525-6. Earlier letters evidence his considerable interest in their works, (34) and he was doubtless grateful for the welcome and shelter he received. It may be significant however that he did not apparently wish to remain in a "protestant" environment after it became possible for him to return to France, nor did he apparently advocate reforms based on their example after his return. His closest "protestant" contact was his own friend and disciple, Guillaume Farel; (35)

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Stapulensis remained in friendly correspondence with Farel after the latter's departure from Meaux in 1524,<sup>(36)</sup> but had apparently little inclination to follow him, nor did he immediately seek him out in Basle when he was himself forced into exile the following year. What little evidence survives suggests that he positively rejected Farel's more extreme and violent stance,<sup>(37)</sup> and found himself more in sympathy with his other friend and disciple, the Catholic reformer, Gerard Roussel.<sup>(38)</sup>

It lies outside the limits of this thesis to attempt any estimate of Stapulensis' influence on those who came after him, but brief comment on two topics seems appropriate. The visit made to him by Calvin in 1533/4, about which little is known, would seem to be of no great significance in Stapulensis' own life, beyond demonstrating the esteem in which he was held, and emphasising the fact that differences between "Catholic" and "Protestant" were not yet too sharply polarised. It has sometimes been suggested that the activity at Meaux was a prelude to Calvin's own reforming activity,<sup>(39)</sup> and that Stapulensis' "theocentric humanism" foreshadows that of Calvin and Bucer.<sup>(40)</sup> It is true that themes in Stapulensis' work occasionally seem to reappear in the writings of Calvin. Commenting on psalm 100:2, in his Latin Psalter, Stapulensis contrasts the pure, uncorrupted state of the spiritual church with the condition of the physical church in a manner perhaps reminiscent of Calvin's invisible church.<sup>(41)</sup> Occasionally the expression in the Sunday Homilies of how the ordinary Christian enjoys the gifts of the Holy Spirit to enable him to discern and respond to the inspired character of the scriptures, or of evangelical preaching, may sound somewhat like Calvin's doctrine of the authentication of the inspiration of scripture in the conscience of the individual believer. Such similarities seem to be accidental rather than evidence of direct continuity between the work of Calvin and that of Stapulensis. However a more tangible connection has been demonstrated. Stapulensis' 1530



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French translation of the Bible, as revised in 1534, was the basis for the edition produced by Pierre Robert Olivetan at Serrières in 1535, which in some sense marked the point of departure for French Protestantism. Olivetan adopted Stapulensis' translation of the New Testament and of the apochrypha of the Old Testament.<sup>(42)</sup>

It seems unlikely however that Stapulensis would ever have gone the way of Calvin. For him the evil of schism overshadowed even the flagrant abuses he would have liked to correct. For him "the Church was one and indivisible, the seamless coat of her Lord" and his mystical inclination enabled him to see her, "not as she was but as the Lord himself intended her to be".<sup>(43)</sup> His ideal of christiformity was not wholly obstructed by current abuses, which did not mean that he was merely an individualist living alongside the Church; had this been so it seems unlikely that he would have become involved in Briçonnet's reforming work in Meaux. It is true that towards the end of his life he may have become discouraged and so have retired from the public struggle for reform, but this exhaustion of an old man did not amount to a change of policy. Bishop Briçonnet has been described as "one of those who wanted reform within the Church, and feared that outside the Church, or against the Church, such reform could bear no fruit";<sup>(44)</sup> Stapulensis surely shared this view, and is aptly characterised by another description of the evangelical movement at Meaux, a reformist ideal which was "positive, reflective, serene, non-controversial and non-argumentative".<sup>(45)</sup> The summing up of his "errors" by Jean de Quintan in 1531 as "few and slight, novelties rather than serious matters" seems to have been about the right estimate.<sup>(46)</sup>



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- (1) Cf. David Knowles, The Evolution of Mediaeval Thought, (London, 1962) Part Five, 'The Breakdown of the Mediaeval Synthesis', pp. 291-337.
- (2) Cf. above chapter 2, note (13).
- (3) Johannes Solidus, or Jan Schilling from Cracow, was associated with Stapulensis from at least 1504 until his death in 1518. His travels took him to Paris, Rome and the Rhineland as well as Cracow in his search for manuscripts for Stapulensis. Jodocus Clichtoveus, or Josse Clichtove, c.1466-1543; taught philosophy in Paris from c.1490; doctor of theology 1506; parish priest in Tournay and canon of Chartres; a writer and publisher in his own right, as well as friend and assistant of Stapulensis.
- (4) See G.H.M. Posthumus-Meyjes, 'Protestant Irenicism in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries' Lecture given at the Colloque Internationale d'Histoire Ecclesiastique, Durham 1981. In 1519, writing to Beatus Rhenanus, Stapulensis referred to himself as such an infrequent letter-writer "ut in albo sim obscurorum virorum", a humorous allusion to the publication of the Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum in 1514 and 1517, in the course of the Reuchlin affair.
- (5) See Bédouelle:L'Intelligence, p.201, where it is suggested that the 1518 works on the Magdalen make a more rigorous use of scriptural texts than did the 1512 Pauline Commentary, in connection with the question of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. However it should also be noted that the Magdalen pamphlets did invoke evidence from the visions of Elizabeth of Schonau.
- (6) Cf. Bédouelle:L'Intelligence, pp. 190-205, where it is suggested that Stapulensis was to a large extent independent of the tradition of the Church. Cf. also Massaut:Critique et Tradition, pp. 47-59 for an analysis of Stapulensis' scriptural hermeneutics which would lead to a rather different conclusion.
- (7) Cf. the terms of the entry in the Index Librorum Prohibitorum, above, chapter 1, note (167).
- (8) Cf. above, chapter 1, notes (45) and (196).
- (9) Cf. above chapter 1, especially notes (61) and (191).
- (10) Renaudet: Préréf. p.632 and Renaudet: Hum. & Ren. p.214, implies this evolution, but presents what seems to be a slightly misleading picture of it, saying in the first place that Stapulensis



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- hesitated to formulate a programme of practical reforms; and, in the second, that after 1523 Stapulensis embarked on a programme of decisive reform. He goes on to credit Stapulensis with all the actions of which Briçonnet and the Meaux reformers were collectively (and perhaps exaggeratedly) accused, and concludes by saying that the publication of the Sunday Homilies in 1525 demonstrated a liberty, founded on the Bible alone, which refused to bow to Roman tradition.
- (11) Cf. his preface to Ruysbroeck's De Ornatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum, 1512, where he divided his treatise on mysticism into three sections, concerning "The Active Life", "The Spiritual and Affective Life", and "The Contemplative or Super-essential Life".
- (12) See Quincuplex:Preface.
- (13) Renaudet:Hum. & Ren. p.213: the statement "He (i.e. Stapulensis) took no notice of the bull Exsurge Domine; he knew that Leo X was not infallible" seems to be an over-simple presentation of the case.
- (14) Cf. his remarks in the Magdalen pamphlet, Disceptatio, secunda emissio para.55, about the obligation of those professionally involved in study to maintain the pursuit of truth for the benefit of the Church. An interesting development of the argument in favour of the doctrinal authority of professional scholars has been apparent in the present century, exemplified in such writings as Y.M.J.Congar, Bref Histoire des formes du "Magistère" et de ses relations avec les Docteurs. Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques, 60 (1976) pp. 85-98. Stapulensis' appreciation of the role of all baptised members of the Church is paralleled in Vatican II: Lumen Gentium, paras. 12 & 35.
- (15) Cf. above, chapter 3, especially note.(19); see parallels in Vatican II:Lumen Gentium, para. 13.
- (16) Cf. above, chapter 3, note (13); see parallels in Vatican II:Lumen Gentium, paras. 1 & 48.
- (17) E.g. passages concerning baptism, reconciliation and eucharist discussed in chapters 3 and 4 above.
- (18) Cf. above, chapter 5.
- (19) See Vatican II: Sacrosanctum Concilium, para.73.
- (20) See Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II, Constitutiones, Decreta, Declarationes (Vatican, 1966).



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- (21) It may be noted however that phrases in Sunday Hom. 20 Pent. Matt.22, commenting on the parable of the King's Wedding-feast, are approximate quotations from Luther's treatise De Christiana Libertate, concerning the marriage between Christ and the soul; cf. above, chapter 4, note (60).
- (22) See G. Chantraine, Review of Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, Nouvelle Revue Théologique, t.101 (Jan-Feb.1979), pp. 115-6. The reviewer says that Stapulensis' "Christocentrism does not have an ecclesial texture" and that his "anagogy does not truly recognise the mediation of the Church or of active collaboration". This estimate seems inadequate, and might perhaps have been modified by a first-hand acquaintance with Stapulensis' own writings.
- (23) Cf. above, chapter 3, note (11).
- (24) D'Argentré, t.II, pp. 35 et seq, Propositio XIX.
- (25) Cf. Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Secunda Secundae, q.188, art.6: "...maius est illuminare quam lucere solum; ita maius est contemplata aliis tradere quam solum contemplari..." Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet and Marguerite of Angoulême both offer a similar example of how an intense personal spirituality gave rise to a pastoral concern for others. Cf. above, chapter 1, note (125), C. Martineau and M. Veissière, Corrèspondance.
- (26) D'Argentré, t.II, p.i: "...neque utile.... prorsus perniciosum....alias translationes Bibliae...".
- (27) "...Secondement diront que en leur baillant ainsi les evangiles maintes choses seront difficilles et obscures, lesquelles les simples gens ne pourront comprendre, mais pourront estre cause de erreur; parquoy n'est convenable de les bailler ainsi. Il n'estoit point doncques convenable pas ceste mesme raison que les evangelistes les baillassent ainsi aux Grecz, et ainsi les Latins aux Latins; car il y a moult de lieux difficiles et obscurs, lesquels ne les Grecz ne les Latins ne pevent comprendre, et suffit de les croire, comme nostre seigneur commande disant, Credite evangelio, Croyez a l'evangile. Et les plus subtilz d'engins et litzerez comme Arrius, Eunomius, Photinus, Sabellius et plusieurs autres sont tombez en erreur..."
- (28) For examples of this, with discussion, see Bédouelle:L'Intelligence, pp. 210-1.



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- (29) See Alfred Laune, Lefèvre D'Etaples et la Traduction française de la Bible, Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, XXXII (1895), pp. 56-72, where Stapulensis' responsibility for the 1534 French Bible is asserted in an unqualified manner along with the essentially Lutheran character of that work. It is also said that Brignonnet definitively separated himself from the Lutheran movement in 1525, which forced Stapulensis to flee to Strasbourg because he would not capitulate also.
- (30) Cf. above, chapter 1, especially notes (108) and (183). See also S.L. Greenslade, Cambridge History of the Bible (Cambridge, 1965) Vol. 2, p.25, where it is asserted that Luther derived his christo-centric interpretation of the Old Testament from Stapulensis.
- (31) Cf. note (22) above.
- (32) See Franz Hildebrandt, Melancthon, Alien or Ally ? (Cambridge, 1946), pp. 1-15.
- (33) Cf. note (22) above.
- (34) See Stapulensis, Meaux, 6 July 1524, to Guillaume Farel; Herminjard I, No. 103, pp. 219-231.
- (35) Guillaume Farel, 1489-1565; Paris 1509-21; an associate of Stapulensis in Meaux until he left for Gap en route for Basle in 1524; there he met and joined forces with Calvin in 1534, and remained his disciple until Calvin's death. See du Plessis: Histoire I, p.5.
- (36) See above, chapter 1, notes (134) and (135).
- (37) See note (34) above, especially Herminjard I, p.223, note 24; see also Gerard Roussel, St. Germain en Laye, 7 December 1526, to Guillaume Farel; Herminjard I, No. 184, pp. 457-61.
- (38) Gerard Roussel, 1480-1550; Paris 1502-21; Meaux 1521-5; in 1526 he returned from Strasbourg to the royal court at Blois, and in the same year became bishop of the diocese of St. Paul-Trois-Châteaux in Dauphiné. In 1527 he was attached to the court of Marguerite at Navarre as almoner, and in 1535 became bishop of Oleron. See Charles Schmidt, Gerard Roussel, Prédicateur de la Reine Marguerite de Navarre (Strasbourg, 1845; reprint Geneva, 1970).

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- (39) See R.J. Lavy, Les Origines de la Réforme Française (Paris, 1959).
- (40) See Karl Speiss, Gottesbegriff des J. Faber Stapulensis, Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Religiösen Eigenart Johann Kalvins (Marburg, 1930), p. 182.
- (41) See Institutes of the Christian Religion, book 4, chapter 1, para. 7.
- (42) See E. Reuss, Fragments Littéraires et Critiques Relatifs à L'Histoire de la Bible Française, Revue de Théologie, III, pp. 217-252, and IV, pp. 281-322 (1865): also Bédouelle: L'Intelligence, pp. 116-7.
- (43) George V. Jourdan, The Movement Towards Catholic Reform in the Early Sixteenth Century (London, 1914), pp. 121-2.
- (44) See note (29) above, Alfred Laune, Lefèvre D'Etaples et la Traduction.
- (45) Lucien Febvre, Dolet Propagateur de l'Évangile; Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, VI (1945) pp. 98-170.
- (46) Cf. note (9) above.



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